

# MILITARY

ILLUSTRATED

PAST & PRESENT

No.66

NOVEMBER 1993

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**BBC RADIO READER COMPETITION**

**GUERRILLA WARFARE BADGE**

**EGYPTIAN CAMPAIGN 1882**

**BATTLE OF GOMMENCOURT, 1916**

**THE YOUNG ULYSSES S. GRANT**

**ROYAL GUARDS OF FRANCE**

**CROATIA IN THE 19TH CENTURY**

**THE LUGER LANGE PISTOLE '08**



# MILITARY ILLUSTRATED

□ PAST & PRESENT □

No. 66

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Our front cover illustration by Velimir Vuksic shows a Croatian Honved hussar of the 10th Varazdin Regiment in 1914. See article on page 21

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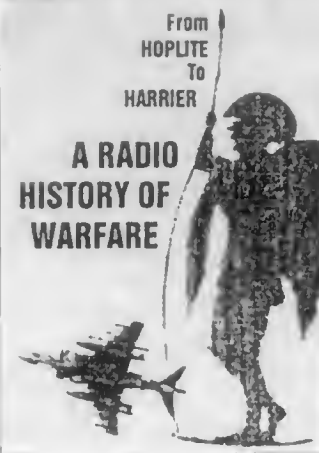
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## HOPLITE TO HARRIER READER COMPETITION

A *Radio History of Warfare*, written and presented by BBC Defence Correspondent Marcus Ross, is currently coming to a close on the BBC World Service. The ten half-hour episodes trace the history of warfare from the ancient world to the Gulf conflict, and finish with a penetrating look at the probable future of warfare with a proliferation of nuclear powers over the next couple of decades and the near certainty of other situations arising such as the current conflict in what was Yugoslavia.

Each episode is broken up by expert comment from eminent military historians, music, sound effects from modern re-enactments or, from the more recent years, actual battle recordings, and quotations from contemporary writers. The whole package amounts to lively and far from superficial history of warfare around the world, discussing weapons, organisation, tactics and leadership, on land, at sea and, latterly, in the air.

The BBC has prepared exclusively for readers of *Military Illustrated* five sets of Dolby audio cassettes of the entire series. These cassettes will not be available commercially, and there is only this one opportunity to win a set.

To enter, answer the following three questions on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope; add your name and address; and mail to: Radio Competition, *Military Illustrated*, 36 Gannet Lane, Wellingborough, Northants NN8 4NW, to arrive no later than 1 December 1993. The senders of the first five correct entries drawn from the postbag will receive their cassettes in time for Christmas. The editor's decision on all entries is final and no correspondence can be entered into. Winners' names and the correct answers will be published in the February 1994 issue ('MI' 69).

Question 1: From what does the word 'hoplite' originate?

Question 2: What, in 17th century warfare was 'an apostle'?

Question 3: Which is the only combat aircraft able to 'viff'?

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## MODEL SOLDIERS

Being one of those readers who has no strong feelings either way about the inclusion of Third Reich militaria in your magazine, I have found the recent correspondence on the subject amusing rather than anything else.

However, I must disagree with one of your correspondents on another point. He complains ('MI' 65) about the inclusion of too many articles on model soldiers. All I can say is that he cannot have been reading recent issues sufficiently attentively. I started buying 'MI' a year or so ago, attracted particularly by an article by Bill Horan, and have thoroughly enjoyed subsequent show reports by him and John Regan. But for the last six months there has been nothing, which I find disappointing. Please, can you bring them back? I do not expect 'MI' to cover the practical side of modelling — 'MM' covers that perfectly adequately — but I do feel the inclusion of well photographed colour pictures of prizewinning models helps those of us lesser mortals to aspire to higher standards; and your colour reproduction is generally better than most.

Geoff Barker, Oxford

Amidst the recent flurry of correspondence about the Third Reich, one of your readers makes an observation about the inclusion of model soldier material in the magazine. I quite agree. 'MI' is a serious, in many ways scholarly, magazine and the inclusion of this 'Mickey Mouse' material can only endanger rather than enhance your reputation. I have been pleased, therefore, to see that more recent issues have carried little on the subject.

Surely, the appeal of 'MI' to those who are modellers — and I am not knocking them: to each his own — must lie in the highly detailed uniform information, and in particular the colour photos of preserved and reconstructed uniforms. Where, except in 'MI', could you find details of the exact construction techniques for 17th century footwear or Roman armour, to cite but two examples. Surely this sort of material is of more value to modellers than pretty pictures of individual models created out of someone else's imagination and skill?

If you *must* include model soldier material, why not run some features on the many military museums which have fantastic dioramas on display? I realise photography in these places is not always easy but, as you pointed out in your Museums Guide ('MI' 63) there are usually ways around this. Why not ask those readers who live near a museum to try their hand at writing and illustrating an article of their own? (I'd have a go myself but my photography is at the 'Box

Brownie' level!)

Hugh Watkins, Stamford

(If any readers would like to take up Mr Watkins' suggestion, I would be very pleased to hear from them. But what do others feel on the general topic of model soldier features? Ed.)

## THIRD REICH AND OTHERS

Although I am a collector of Third Reich militaria, I have no axe to grind on behalf of what was a hideous regime, no mistake. But, as some of your recent correspondents have pointed out, the Nazis do not hold a monopoly on atrocities. I am thinking in particular of the British themselves during the colonial period, and if I have any complaint about 'MI', it is that there have been too many articles on 19th century campaigns and uniforms over recent months. But I accept that many readers find this a fascinating period, and I would not deny them the privilege of reading about it. Some of the recent articles from Ray Westlake and Carlton Wrigley, for example, have been excellent — if you like that sort of thing. Personally, I'd rather see more on the ancient and mediaeval periods like Dan Peterson's on the Roman Legionary and David Nicolle's on the Mamluks (and Velimir Vuksic and Dick Fischer's brilliant piece on mediaeval Croatia). I'd also like to see more articles on weapons, such as the excellent piece a few months ago on the Dreyse and Chassepot needle rifles. But I realise your space is limited and you have to try to cater for all tastes, and I always find something of interest even if it is not one of my own preferred topics. Keep it up!

Alan Partridge,  
Wolverhampton

What has happened to the British tradition of fair play? I find the 'holier than thou' attitude of some of your readers' letters over the last couple of issues absolutely unbelievable. Perhaps they refuse to read books about the Second World War because they include mention of the Waffen-SS? The Wehrmacht is not guiltless either, many men in the army, navy and air force were

confirmed Nazis, and what about the Japanese and Russians? Their atrocities were often worse.

John Wilkins, Southampton

I read with interest the correspondence on the inclusion of subject matter relating to the Germany of 1933-45. As I am primarily interested in the 18th Century and the Napoleonic periods, I can with a clear conscience give the historian's escape clause 'It's not my period'. However, as a history graduate, I was somewhat surprised by some of the 'historical' views put forward; among which the Amritsar 'massacre' was translated some ten years into the future in a positively Wellsian manner.

Yet this brings us back to the matter of the military wing of the Nazi party — the SS. As has been mentioned this was a somewhat variegated organisation which, as well as the foreign 'volunteers', included under its 'opcon' such units as the Latvian Legion (not to be confused with the notorious police battalions). Still two points ought to be made about the subject matter; the first is that over much attention is being paid to the SS to the neglect of study of the Wehrmacht (the Heer, Kriegsmarine and Luftwaffe) proper. The second relates to the suspicion that the enormities of the Soviet state can somehow be ignored while those of the SS are condemned. Neither should be condoned, yet both are legitimate subjects of study. Much of the history of the 20th century is unpleasant. I am also surprised that nobody has mentioned the Vendée in an earlier era, though the storming of Badajoz has been mentioned. I have grave doubts about whether the morality (or lack of it) of the historian is a suitable subject for this journal.

Magnus Guild, Edinburgh

**Errata:** In Mr Eliot Wilson's letter 'MI' 64, p8, 'independent' Supreme Commander should have read 'incompetent'. And in Dr Stephen Bull's article on the Lancashire Hussars, the bottom caption on p27 and top caption on p29 are transposed. Apologies all round. Ed.

# BOOK REVIEWS

**Encyclopaedia of German Tanks of World War Two (revised Edition) by Peter Chamberlain and Hilary Doyle, Technical Editor Thomas L. Jentz. Arms & Armour; ISBN 1-85409-214-6; 272pp; 1,000-plus mono illu; appendices; index of vehicle names; £25.00.**

When the first edition of this book first appeared in 1978 it was hailed as a *tour de force*, but still suffered

from a lack of precise information in many instances which were a characteristic of the research of the time, much information subsequently revealed being simply unavailable. The authors have taken advantage of the subsequent quarter-century, and in particular it seems of records which were until recently hidden behind the Iron Curtain, to address themselves to the task of a completely revised

new edition.

In particular, they have utilised manufacturers' records to track down unit allocations and exact vehicle types from chassis numbers, production reports and OKH acceptance and strength reports. The results include the most accurate dating, description and data for each vehicle possible, resulting in what is to all intents and purposes a brand new book, even though the publishers have branded it a revised edition.

The book covers all German armoured vehicles, so the title is a misnomer, from the PzKpfw I to the Maus, other fully-tracked vehicles, half-tracks, armoured cars and captured enemy armoured vehicles in German service. Reproduction quality of the photographs is variable, as only to be expected, but by and large they are well chosen and printed so as to reveal the most salient features. Technical specifications are also excellent.

**The Eastern Front: Armour Camouflage and Markings, 1941 to 1945** by Steven J. Zaloga and James Grandsden. Arms & Armour; ISBN 1-85409-213-8; 96pp; 56 colour & 150 illu. plus colour insignia; select bibliography; £8.99.

Steve Zaloga needs no introduction to students of Soviet armour and here he teams up with James Grandsden who specialises in the 'lesser' nations who took part in the greatest land battle of all time. The result is a superb book, now in paperback for the first time, to the same format originally pioneered for Squadron/Signal by Bruce Culver, with short text, large, well-chosen photographs and informative artwork (don't be put off by the colour tones on the cover, the ones inside are OK).

The vehicles chosen range from light armoured vehicles to main battle tanks and embrace not only those of Germany and Russia but also, eg. British tanks in Soviet service as well as the vehicle of Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechoslovakia, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Yugoslavia.

As well as paintings of specific vehicles, the colour plates include detail views of specific divisional (etc) insignia. Although the subject is really too vast to encompass in just 96 pages, this is a book which repays close study.

**D-Day to Berlin: Armour Camouflage and Markings of the United States, British and German Armies, June 1944 to May 1945** by Terence Wise. Arms & Armour; ISBN 1-85409-212-X; 96pp; 65 colour & 146 mono illu.; £8.99.

This second paperback reprint in the 'Armour Camouflage and Markings' series does not attempt to be as ambitious as Zaloga's and Grandsden's, and in particular excludes Canadian and Free French

vehicles. Within his brief, however, Terry Wise has produced a workmanlike job, although the inclusion of a few more 79th Armoured Division 'Funnies' would have been appreciated. Having said this, the sheer number and variety of vehicles used by the three principal antagonists during this period have obviously necessitated selection, and for model-makers in particular there is plenty to choose from.

**D.D.R. Collectors Reference Guides: Val 1 - Flags and Banners, Political and Para Military** by Tany L. Oliver. TLO Militaria, Longclose House, Camman Raad, Etan Wick, Nr Windsor, Berks SL4 6QY; 106pp; mainly colour; £10.00 plus £0.50 p&p.

Although the 'flea market' boom in the uniforms and insignia of what was the German Democratic Republic has now passed and prices of the rarer items in particular are rising sharply, there is still plenty of material available. It is also extremely popular, not least because, while the Federal Republic was trying to divest itself of visible links with the Nazi era in the post-war period, the East Germans retained in their uniforms and insignia much reminiscent not just of that short-lived era, but of Prussian tradition. And since the DDR lasted for considerably longer than Hitler's Reich, there is much more collectable material available, and in generally better condition.

Tony Oliver, the well known collector who has for several years spent much time in Germany seeking out Third Reich memorabilia, has since the Berlin Wall began to crumble been collecting DDR items as well, has now begun cataloguing them for fellow collectors in this first 'Collectors Reference Guide'.

Monika Smith's excellent photographs of flags and banners are backed up by historical photos in colour and monochrome of award ceremonies, etc, and the text, although short, is informative.

**Birmingham in the First World War** by J.F. Lethbridge. Newgate Press; 245 St Margaret's Road, Eard End, Birmingham B8 2DY; 59pp; bibliography; £3.95 including p&p.

Privately produced books, of too limited appeal to attract a large general publisher, are often the best, not least because they are usually written by enthusiasts for the like-minded. Mr Lethbridge's short but well-written account is no exception.

Rather than being chronological it is divided into theme chapters — for example, on Birmingham's eleven VC winners, the local munitions industry, refugees, rationing, etc. The end result is a remarkably concise but informative book which gives a very good picture of the city at war. The only disappointment is the lack of any photographs.

## ON THE SCREEN

### Video releases to rent:

**And the Violins Stopped Playing (Odyssey: 15)**

THE EXTENT OF JEWS suffering at the hands of the Nazis is well known. However, Hitler's concentration camps also housed other groups such as communists, Jehovah's Witnesses and Gypsies. The last form the subject of Alexander Ramati's *And the Violins Stopped Playing* (1988), adapted from his own documentary novel, itself based on real events.

It begins in Warsaw in November 1942, when Polish gypsy violinist Dymitr (Horst Bucholz) is warned that the Nazis intend to move the gypsies into the now deserted Jewish ghetto. Dymitr has difficulty convincing the band of the imminent danger, but despite opposition is elected to lead them to what he believes will be safety in Hungary. The journey is dangerous: they have to backtrack when their route takes them perilously close to the extermination camp at Sobobor. In the Ukraine, partisans advise them to split into smaller groups. They eventually reach Hungary just as the Germans invade: soon Dymitr and his family are incarcerated in Auschwitz. As they are Aryan, they are not treated as badly as Jews. Dymitr's son Roman (Piotr Polk) finds himself employed interpreting for the infamous doctor Josef Mengele (Marcin Tronski). Some of the family die in the camp, but Roman plans an audacious escape...

The film was shot on location in Poland, in particular Auschwitz. It idealises the gypsy lifestyle but is well made and avoids the sensationalism to which it could have descended. The end credits state that half a million European gypsies either died in concentration camps or in wartime executions during this 'Forgotten Holocaust'. It claims

that no compensation has been received, and makes a plea for an end to discrimination against gypsies.

### Video releases to buy

**The Battle of Britain** (Watershed:E)

**Know Your Ally: Britain** (Watershed:E)

**Burma Victory (DD Distribution:E)**

**US Navy Seals (DD Distribution:E)**

**Royal Marine Commandos (DD Distribution:E)**

Watershed have released two more titles in their WWII series, first reviewed in 'MI'61. This series comprises episodes from an American television series *Hollywood Goes to War*, dealing with documentaries made during World War II by Hollywood directors. In these two, Frank Capra Jr introduces two more films produced or supervised by his father while in command of the 834th Signals Detachment. *The Battle of Britain* was the fourth film in Frank Capra's *Why We Fight* series. The narration begins by describing the evacuation of Dunkirk and the occupation of Paris by the 'self-styled Master Race' in June 1940. Hitler's plan for the invasion of Britain is in three phases, necessitating control of the air. German soldiers sing 'We are sailing against England', but the British population prepares for invasion: the Home Guard drills and women man barrage balloons. The Luftwaffe bombs Channel convoys, RAF airfields, and the cities. The bombing of Coventry is seen as a reprisal for an RAF raid on the submarine yard at Bremen. The narration concludes that 'not one Nazi soldier set foot on British soil', and that the battle was 'not just for the people of Britain, but for the people of the world'.

The narration may not be entirely

A scene from 'And the Violins Stopped Playing'



accurate, but the film features animated maps from the Walt Disney studios and a rousing score by Dimitri Tiomkin. It was directed by Captain Anthony Veiller as Capra was in London working on the American section of *Tunisian Victory*.

*Know Your Ally*. Britain was the first film in a proposed series called *Know Your Allies and Know Your Enemies*, intended for American servicemen. Britain is described as being a 'sardine-can', the size of the State of Idaho but more densely populated. The narration describes how British defeats at Dunkirk, Greece, Hong-Kong, Singapore and Burma were followed by a bomber offensive on Germany and victory in North Africa. It describes differences between Britain and America, but stresses the two countries share freedom of speech and religion. It mentions the monarchy, the parliamentary system, and the British Empire. 'John Britain' is described as liking privacy, but is 'a good man to have on our team'. Production of the film commenced in June 1942, but it was not released until January 1944. It was directed by Robert Stevenson, who co-wrote the film with Anthony Veiller and James Hilton. Capras recorded that 'Churchill loved this



Above: A scene from 'The Battle of Britain'. Below: A scene from 'Burma Victory'.

film'.

*Desert Victory* (1943) (reviewed in 'M'62), *Tunisian Victory* (1944) (reviewed in 'M'64) and *Burma Victory* (1945) form a trilogy of campaign films made under the auspices of the Army Film and Photographic Unit (AFPU). A film was required of the allied victory in Burma masterminded by South-East Asia Command (SEAC)'s commander-in-chief Lord Mountbatten after his appointment in October 1943. Fortunately, Mountbatten was enthusiastic about the project. It was to be the last of the AFPU's campaign films made during the

war.

Initially, Frank Capra commenced work in the United States on a short two-reel film, depicting the activities of General 'Vinegar Joe' Stilwell. David McDonald, the head of AFPU, flew to Washington and secured agreement that the British would make their own longer production, with Capra supplying American footage. The British footage was supplied by David Knight who led the SEAC Film Unit. *Burma Victory* was directed by Roy Boulting who co-wrote the script with Frank Harvey.

The narration describes the problems of monsoon rains, and tropical diseases such as malaria, dysentery and typhus, 'enemies more deadly than the Jap'. Burma is characterised as a jungle enclosed by a horseshoe-shaped range of mountains, from which three main rivers flow in to the sea, the Chindwin, the Irawaddy and the Salween. The Japanese attack in 1942 led to a retreat by the British and Chinese armies and the cutting of the Burma road. The Allies set up SEAC, with Lord Louis Mountbatten as Supreme Commander: he is seen giving a morale-boosting speech to his men.

In March 1944, the Japanese attack the Indian towns of Imphal and Kohima, defended by the Fourteenth Army under the leadership of General Slim. In the north, Stilwell, commanding American army units and their Chinese allies, begins a campaign which will enable a road to be built from Ledo to link with the old Burma road. General Orde Wingate's 'Chindits' make a glider landing, setting up a base in a jungle clearing called 'Broadway' from which they can attack Japanese supply routes. Merrill's Marauders capture the strategic airfield at Myittha. A long advance by the Fourteenth Army and an attack on Kennedy Peak leads to the Chindwin, crossed by a Bailey bridge. In the south, an amphibious landing clears the Japanese from the Arakan. Slim orders timber boats to be constructed to cross the Irawaddy.

There is a fierce fighting around Mandalay: Japanese troops have to be dislodged from the ancient tem-

ples. Rangoon is taken with little resistance, just as the monsoon breaks, effectively concluding the campaign.

As usual, there is some reconstruction. The film opens with an obvious studio shot of two British soldiers sheltering from the monsoon rain. One is idly perusing a tourist brochure which paints a very different picture of Burma from what they are experiencing. Later, Japanese soldiers call out in the jungle in English at night in an attempt to induce them to reveal their positions. A scene showing Mountbatten telling his staff he is 'not going to pull up stumps' for the coming monsoon seems unnaturally forced.

DD Distribution have released two more titles in their *Elite Fighting Forces* series. *US Navy Seals* places their origins in the salvage experts at Pearl Harbor in the aftermath of the Japanese attack who were formed into Underwater Demolition Teams (UDTs) and Combat Demolition Units (CDUs). UDTs and CDUs carried out operations in Sicily, Normandy, the Pacific and later during the Korean War. John F. Kennedy ordered the formation of the Seals in 1962. There is a film of their operations in the Mekong Delta during the Vietnam War, the invasions of Grenada and Panama, and the Gulf War. The programme includes film of training at the Basic Underwater Demolition School (BUDS), at San Diego, California, so demanding that many give up and 'ring the bell'. The video is equivocal about the Seal involvement in the controversial 'Operation Phoenix' and the training of dolphins to attack enemy frogmen in Vietnam.

*Royal Marine Commandos* tells the story of the famous unit from their origins as the Duke of York and Albany's Marine Regiment of Foot in 1664 to the present day. The video examines their role in the various conflicts including both world wars, the Falklands and Northern Ireland. There is film of the gruelling training, alleged to be the longest infantry training course in the Western world. We see exercises in a variety of terrains from the Arctic wastes to tropical jungle.

Stephen J. Greenhill





# THE AUCTION SCENE

AS THE SUMMER auction season came to a close the various rooms must have been feeling that things are improving. It really does begin to appear that things are looking up and better times are just around the corner. Few dealers or rooms would claim that it is not still difficult to find good collections to offer but equally well would agree if that the material can be found it will sell. This year Christies have sold a couple of good collections and Sotheby's have done well with more general sales. Wallis and Wallis, Kent Sales and Weller and Dutty have seen steady sales. There certainly appears to be a little more 'loose' cash about and collectors are beginning to show interest in adding to their collections. As a result of these signs dealers and auction houses were cautiously optimistic that the later part of this year would see a rise in demand. The London Arms Fair which was open on Friday 24 and Saturday 25 September at the Earls Court Park Inn International Hotel could well have been the first big event in the field to benefit from this increased demand. (See next month.)

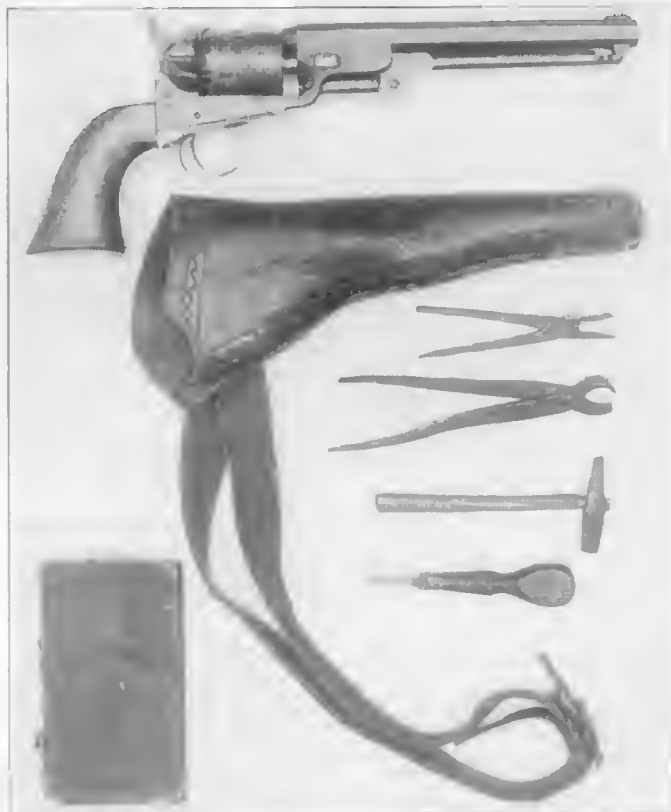
This increasing demand has its down side and judging by published lists of stolen arms and armour the villains also feel the market is improving. Thefts serve to underline the importance of the recent police initiative to encourage owners to photograph their valuables. The most useful pictures are those that clearly show any

special marks or readily identifiable features and general views tend to be of less use. In the worst case such photographs help substantiate any insurance claims.

Ownership of stolen property can be a problem for the auction houses which must accept on trust a vendor's claim. The problem lies not with items such as old masters which are usually instantly recognisable but with quality pieces which may well have changed hands several times since the theft. An owner identifies a piece and claims it but the auction house must obviously check before releasing the item and all this takes time and effort and also incurs costs. There is sometimes an added complication in that somewhere along the chain of purchase the piece may have been bought in *marchée ouvert*. This means that items purchased at street markets such as London's Bermondsey and Portobello negate the original owner's claim. To obtain possession a legal case must be made whereas if purchased from a shop the established owner may simply claim the item.

When the contested item is of considerable value the problem is even more pressing. There was a dispute over the ownership of the revolver that shot Jesse James and was sold by Wallis and Wallis. Fortunately it was all settled before the sale and the weapon sold for a very large sum. This has encouraged others with historic pieces to sell and the Connoisseur Sale to be held by Wallis and Wallis in October will include three more well associated Western firearms.

Continuing the James gang connection is a Colt percussion Navy revolver which was once owned by Jesse and was given by his wife to her daughter-in-law



*The 1851 pattern .36 calibre Colt given by Jesse James' wife to her daughter-in-law, and by her in turn to James' biographer Carl W. Breihan.*

and then duly recorded and authenticated. It has its original holster and belt as well as a few associated tools. The other handgun is Colt single action .45 Army revolver No. 2079 and this one became of interest when a certain Jack McCall used it to shoot that hero of the old West, Wild Bill Hickock, in August 1876 in Deadwood. The third Western gun is a lever action .22 Winchester rifle which was owned by various members of the James gang. Unlike the others its use was less murderous for it was apparently only used for small game for food.

In contrast to these veteran weapons the same sale is offering a hunting rifle which was once the property of Hermann Göring, the rotund head of the German Luftwaffe during World War II. Like the other prize pieces this weapon is well documented and will undoubtedly attract keen buyers and all will realise a high price.

Weapons tend to be the most popular collectors' items but there is a good market for armour although there is less available. The sale at Wallis and Wallis in July offered a number of pieces including a cuirass together with its thigh pieces or tassets. Despite the fact that it had undergone some repair and restoration it still fetched £900. A close helmet probably for a cuirassier but of slightly unusual design sold for £1,350. A rare helmet of the South Shropshire Yeomanry circa 1840 failed to reach its reserve and did not sell.

Other uniform material contin-

ues to sell well with early buttons fetching good prices and a shoulder belt and back pouch of The 14th (King's) Hussars sold for £600 despite the fact that it was not in pristine condition. Indian Army material is still selling well and a full dress tunic of the Maharajah of Bahawalpur's Bodyguard with a pair of matching breeches sold at £500.

Head-dress badges, once the preserve of small boys with limited pocket money, have now climbed the social scale and most are well beyond the pocket of the young collector. A Newcastle Engineer Volunteer's helmet plate cost £140 and a Glengarry badge of The 88th (Connaught Rangers) Regiment sold at £95. One group of badges that seem to be rising in price is that of police units. In the past police helmet plates and badges have failed to make much in the rooms but the last Billingshurst Sotheby's sale included a number which sold well. At Wallis and Wallis a Sudanese provincial police officer's silver and enamel badge, hallmarked for 1928, from Darfur province realised a respectable £95.

Could this be the new popular collector's field or are there just one or two competing collectors pushing up the prices? Only the next few sales are likely to show.

**Frederick Wilkinson**

*'A Flight Dover Patrol Airships passing over Medway to Kingsnarth RNAS 16.5.16.' Watercolour by James Page. (All photos courtesy Wallis and Wallis.)*



# The German Guerrilla Warfare Badge, 1944

ROBIN LUMSDEN

THE HARSHNESS OF German policies towards the civilian population in the conquered eastern territories contributed, in part, to the rapid growth of resistance during the second half of 1941, and this resistance was largely characterised by partisan warfare. The vastness of the area behind the German lines and a terrain of marshes, forests and mountains lent themselves to guerrilla attacks. The partisan movement largely stemmed from the presence in German occupied territory of whole Red Army units that had been cut off by the rapidity of the German advance.

As early as July 1941 the Central Committee of the Communist Party called upon Soviet citizens to join these units and take up arms, and the following year the Soviet High Command took steps to co-ordinate guerrilla activity by establishing the Central Staff of the Partisan Movement. Liaison Officers, wireless equipment, weapons and supplies were provided in ever-increasing numbers and partisan operations were fully integrated into Red Army strategy. In addition to widespread attacks on German communications, partisans made specific efforts in support of Soviet offensives, notably at Kursk, and were able to ease the progress of conventional forces by securing bridges and key

HITLER'S INVASION of the Soviet Union in June 1941 soon resulted in the Wehrmacht facing an entirely new type of enemy, professionally organised partisans who attacked in large groups capable of taking on and defeating German units of battalion or even regimental strength. As the war progressed, similar partisan bands appeared in Poland, the Balkans, Italy and, to a lesser degree, France. This article describes the history behind the special decoration which the Germans awarded for participation in the ferocious war against these 'invisible enemies'.

installations in the path of their advance. Such a role was markedly more effective than partisan attempts to engage German forces in open combat or to liberate or defend territory, for German units always tended to be better and more heavily equipped than the partisans.

From the outset, the struggle between German and partisan was one without mercy. No quarter was expected, nor given. Atrocities committed against captured German soldiers were met with a policy of extermination on the part of the occupying forces. The Germans relied upon constant reprisals against the civilian population and major offensives against guerrilla groups. These failed to curtail the resistance, however, and tied down large numbers of troops. Vast tracts of German occupied ter-

ritory soon became virtual no-go areas, allowing the Soviets to co-ordinate partisan sabotage activities.

It quickly became obvious that it would be impossible for the Wehrmacht alone to maintain order throughout Russia and eastern Europe. Consequently, during 1942, a large number of German civil policemen, the Ordnungspolizei or Orpo, supplemented by Allgemeine-SS conscripts, were transferred to 30 newly created independent Police Regiments comprising around 100 battalions, each of 500 men. They were organised and equipped on a military basis and served as security troops in the occupied countries. These German formations were later designated 'SS-Police' Regiments to distinguish them from the native 'Police Rifle' units, and they subsequently

gained a reputation for extreme brutality and fanatical loyalty to the Nazi regime.

In October, 1942, Himmler was made responsible for all anti-partisan operations. In a speech given shortly afterwards, he stated that the new enemy did not deserve the title 'Partisans', which had patriotic connotations, as they were simply members of outlaw 'Banden' or 'gangs'. These gangster guerrillas were to be rooted out and executed without trial. Himmler appointed SS-Obergruppenführer Erich von dem Bach as his Chief of Counter-Guerrilla Units (*Chef der Bandenkampfverbände*).

Von dem Bach was a pathological Slav-hater who had been born 'von dem Bach-Zelewski' and had dropped the 'Zelewski' from his name in 1939 because he felt it sounded 'too Polish'. He realised that the territories to be controlled, especially in Russia, were so vast that even the SS-Police and Police Rifles needed additional support, and so various pro-German local militias and home guard units composed mainly of Balts, Cossacks and Ukrainians were raised and consolidated into an auxiliary police force known as the *Schutzmannschaft der Ordnungspolizei* or *Schuma*. Members of the *Schuma* were generally nationalists at heart whose main aim was the defeat of Communism, and they



SS-Obergruppenführer Erich von dem Bach accepting the surrender of the Polish Home Army General Bor-Komorowski after the crushing of the Warsaw Uprising, Ozarow, 2 October 1944. Von dem Bach wears the Knight's Cross which he received two days before, and the Guerrilla Warfare Badge in Bronze can just be seen below the Iron Cross on his left breast pocket. All the other Germans in the photograph are Police officers.

viewed the German forces as liberators.

In Poland, 12 SS-Police Regiments supported the Wehrmacht in maintaining order, backed up by the Polish Police and 12 *Schuma* battalions. Fourteen SS-Police Regiments served in Byelorussia, as did seven Police Rifle Regiments which were mixed German-Russian units, and a vast number of *Schuma* battalions. In Estonia, 26 *Schuma* battalions were formed, and an estimated 15,000 Latvians and 13,000 Lithuanians served in 64 other *Schuma* battalions deployed right across the Eastern Front. The Ukraine alone supplied 70,000 volunteers to staff a further 71 *Schuma* battalions. Tito's partisan movement in the Balkans was so strong that several entire Waffen-SS divisions, notably 'Prinz Eugen' (see next month's issue) and 'Handschar', were raised to combat it, and they were backed up by 15,000 men of the German-Croatian Gendarmerie, ten Serbian auxiliary police battalions and two Albanian Police Rifle Regiments.

The largest German anti-partisan sweep of the war, Operation 'Cottbus', which took place in Byelorussia in June 1943, involved nearly 17,000 German troops and was conducted so brutally and ruthlessly that nothing, human or animal, was left alive in the zone of operations. Nevertheless, 'Cottbus' failed to trap its quarry and was a major setback for von dem Bach.

The partisans went from strength to strength and by



An original example of the Guerrilla Warfare Badge in Bronze — obverse. The Hydra has five heads and a single tail, which is wrapped around the sword blade.



Reverse of an original example of the Guerrilla Warfare Badge. Note in particular the semi-hollow 'scooped' appearance, the needle pin and the barrel-hinge.

mid-1944 numbered around 400,000 in Warsaw, 390,000 in Yugoslavia, 230,000 in the Baltic States, 150,000 in Byelorussia, 50,000 in Northern Italy, 40,000 in the Ukraine, 40,000 in Greece and 35,000 in Albania. There were also hundred of smaller local resistance groups in France, Holland, Belgium, Norway and Denmark. In

August 1944 the partisan 'Polish Home Army' rose up in Warsaw, in anticipation of approaching Red Army assistance, but the latter never materialised. The rebels initially gained control of two-thirds of the city, but the ferocity of the SS and Police response, which levelled the city, forced the Poles underground, into the sewers, where

they were gradually reduced and defeated by forces equipped with flamethrowers and armour, supported by a Luftwaffe Stuka squadron. The crushing of the Warsaw Uprising was the greatest anti-partisan 'victory' achieved by the Germans during the war. Von dem Bach, who personally commanded a Battle Group in Warsaw, received the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross after the successful conclusion of the fighting.

The increasing ferocity of the war waged against the partisans eventually necessitated the creation of a new decoration to 'reward' those who had been engaged upon it for a prolonged period. On 30 January 1944, Hitler instituted the *Bandenkampfabzeichen*, which translated literally as 'Bandit Battle Badge' but more accurately as 'Guerrilla Warfare Badge'. It is generally known by collectors as the 'Anti-Partisan War Badge', which was the translation adopted in early English language books on Third Reich decorations. Whilst it was open to members of all the German fighting services, and their foreign auxiliaries, the Guerrilla Warfare Badge was officially designated as a '*Kampfabzeichen der Waffen-SS und Polizei*', or 'Waffen-SS and Police Battle Badge', and was the only War Badge so described during the Third Reich.

Award of the badge came under the auspices of Himmler and an order published from his Field Headquarters on 1 February 1944 laid down the following:

**BESITZZEUGNIS**

DEM

Oberleutnant 1er SchP.

Heinz Knaack

//Pol.Reiter Abteilung 1.

VERLEIHE ICH

FÜR TÄPFERE TEILNAHME

AN 50 KÄMPFTAGEN

DAS

**BANDENKAMPFABZEICHEN**

IN Silber

O.U. DEN 30. Januar 1945

Der Höchste // und Polizeiführer  
in Italien

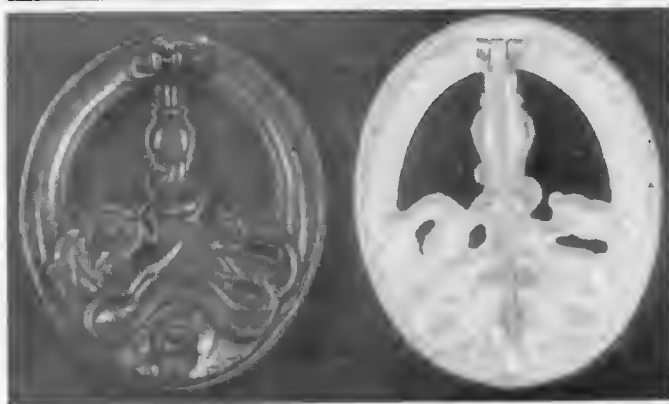
//Obergruppenführer,  
General der Waffen-//

[Signature]

[Circular Stamp]

Citation for the Guerrilla Warfare Badge in Silver awarded to Oberleutnant Heinz Knaack of 1st SS-Police Cavalry Battalion on 30 January 1945. It is signed by SS-Obergruppenführer Karl Wolff, the Supreme SS and Police Commander in Italy and Chief of Himmler's Personal Staff. The citation specifies that Knaack has taken part in 50 combat days against partisans.





Reverses of two typical fake examples of the Guerrilla Warfare Badge. The fake on the left is in a brittle bronze-based alloy with the hinge forming an integral part of the badge casting. The reproduction on the right features a mirror image of the obverse design and its semi-broad, semi-thick pin is typical of fakes produced by the firm of Rudolf Souval in Vienna in the 1970s.

1. The Guerrilla Warfare Badge is both a bravery and merit decoration.

2. It is awarded in three grades, Bronze, Silver and Gold.

3. The Guerrilla Warfare Badge can be awarded to all officers, NCOs and men engaged with the German forces in anti-Guerrilla operations.

4. The qualification for award is:

(a) Bronze — 20 combat days for ground troops

30 combat days for Luftwaffe crews

(b) Silver — 50 combat days for ground troops

75 combat days for Luftwaffe crews

(c) Gold — 100 combat days for ground troops

150 combat days for Luftwaffe crews

5. For ground troops, a combat day is reckoned to be one during which they have taken part in close combat (man against man) with guerrillas. For Luftwaffe crews, a combat day is reckoned to be one during which they have exposed themselves to anti-aircraft fire from guerrilla forces, and being shot down equates to 3 combat days.

6. Combat days may be reckoned as from 1 January 1943.

7. The Guerrilla Warfare Badge may be worn on the left breast of all Wehrmacht, Police, SS and Party uniforms.

8. The badge is awarded with a citation.

9. Posthumous presentations of awards in respect of those

who have qualified for them prior to being killed in action will be made to their next-of-kin.

Qualification for award was therefore very high, making the *Bandenkampfabzeichen* far more difficult to achieve than similar awards like the Infantry, General and Panzer Assault Badges.

Himmler reserved the right to award the Gold badge personally, which is not surprising since it was the equivalent of winning the Close Combat Clasp in Gold twice! The *Völkischer Beobachter* of 21 February 1945 reported that 'The Reichsführer-SS yesterday presented the first Guerrilla Warfare Badges in Gold to 4 members of the Waffen-SS engaged in the fighting on the Adriatic Coast'. While the badge was hard-won, however, Knight's Cross winner Leutnant Hans Sturm, who was awarded the Bronze grade while serving with the Army in Italy, stated after the war that he never wore it as he did not wish to be associated with the atrocities which it represented. Several of his Wehrmacht counterparts appear to have been like-minded as it is very seldom seen in wartime photographs. The Waffen-SS and Police, on the other hand, held the Guerrilla Warfare Badge in high regard and recipients displayed it proudly on every possible occasion, giving it precedence over other war badges. They saw it as 'their' badge, recognising their particular role in quelling rebellion behind the front lines.

The design of the Guerrilla Warfare Badge was based on that of the insignia of the Silesian Freikorps of 1919 and featured a wreath of oakleaves enclosing a sword with sun-wheel swastika (representing the German and auxiliary forces) plunging into a Hydra (the partisans). The badge has always been described in previous literature on the subject as featuring a nest of snakes, but this is *not* the case. Close

examination confirms that the creature depicted is, in fact, a Hydra with a single tail and five heads. (The Hydra was a fabulous multi-headed sea serpent of Greek mythology, and was famed as being almost impossible to destroy since its heads grew quickly again if they were cut off. The parallel with the partisan forces, which sprang up vigorously time and time again, is obvious.) At the sword's point was a totenkopf or death's head, which was doubly appropriate since it symbolised both the SS involvement and the deadly nature of the struggle which was being carried on.

All Guerrilla Warfare Badges were initially produced by the firm of C.E. Juncker, a prestigious medal and decorated manufacturing business sited at Alte Jakobstrasse 13, Berlin. It has been alleged, but not confirmed, that when the Juncker firm was bombed out towards the end of the war, production switched to another (unknown) maker, resulting in two variants of the badge, the Juncker type with solid 'dots' on the sword handle and a second type with hollow 'dots'. It has also been suggested that Himmler ordered Juncker to produce ten Guerrilla Warfare Badges in gold-plated hallmarked silver with diamond-encrusted swastikas, for presentation as personal gifts to those who had won the Oakleaves to the Knight's Cross for their achievements in counter-guerrilla operations. The only real contender for such an award would have been von dem Bach, but he did not receive the Oakleaves and, so far as is known, none of these alleged diamond-encrusted pieces has ever been seen.

All originals of this rare badge which the author has seen have been identical in construction to the example illustrated, being crisply cast in zinc with an appropriate coloured wash. The reverse is semi-hollow, and does not fea-

ture a mirror-image of the obverse design. There is no maker's mark. The needle pin is of steel, with a brass barrel-hinge of typical Juncker type and brass retaining clip.

There are at least 11 fake variations of the Guerrilla Warfare Badge in circulation, some solid and others hollow, in brass, bronze, nickel silver and aluminium. It is important to remember that by the time the Guerrilla Warfare Badge was instituted in 1944, these materials had been universally replaced by zinc in the manufacture of German War Badges. Any Guerrilla Warfare Badge (or, indeed, any other post-1942 badge, eg, the U-Boat Combat Clasp, SA Sports Badge for War Wounded, etc) made from a metal other than zinc should be viewed with the greatest suspicion. Some reproductions have broad, flat pins and others bear makers' marks, including 'C.E. Juncker, Berlin', '2' (the code for Juncker) and 'L56' (the code for Funk & Brünninghaus, not a known maker of the Guerrilla Warfare Badge). A 'de-luxe' version of the Gold grade, in solid brass with a blued steel sword blade and silver pin has been reported, but probably falls into the same category as the 'de-luxe Close Combat Clasp in Gold with top hook' which appeared at militaria fairs around 1987 and which turned out to be a fake from the same stable as the so-called Silver Clasp for Female SS Auxiliaries.

The reason why so many good reproductions of the Guerrilla Warfare Badge are about can be explained simply by the rarity of the original item and the consequent high prices commanded. The following list gives details of examples of the award recently offered for sale in the UK, with the prices sought. Where the badges concerned were actually viewed by the author, an opinion as to their originality or otherwise is also given. As can readily be seen, price does not necessarily equate with originality! **MT**

Dec 1987	Silver grade	£350	Fake
Dec 1987	Gold grade	£650	Fake
May 1990	Gold grade	£750	Original
Oct 1991	Silver grade	£495	Not Seen
Oct 1992	Silver grade	£585	Not Seen
Dec 1992	Bronze grade	£375	Fake
Jan 1993	Bronze grade	£420	Fake
Mar 1993	Bronze grade	£350	Original

#### Further reading

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*Badges of the Third Reich*, Bender Publications, San Jose, 1968.

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# Brudenell, Nolan and That Fateful Message

NEIL LEONARD

WE TURN NOW to the life of Lewis Edward Nolan. He was the second son of brevet Major Babington Nolan and was born in 1818. Major Nolan had served in the 61st and 70th Regiments of Foot and then retired on half pay as a brevet Major in the 6th Foot.

Nolan's mother had had two other sons and had previously been married to a man named Macfarlane. She did have one son by this marriage, William Richard Macfarlane, who had served with the 42nd Foot and the 92nd Foot and eventually retired as a Captain. The eldest Nolan, Archibald Buchanan, born in 1815, and the youngest Nolan, Edmond de Courcy, born in 1820, were both destined for a military career as well.

Nolan's father, when a Captain on half pay, obtained a post as the vice consul at Milan, then under Austrian control. Through this connection all three brothers were to enter the Austrian service, being placed at one of the Austrian military colleges.

**Right:**

*Captain Nolan circa 1850.  
ADC to Lord Raglan.  
Unknown artist circa 1850.  
Coloured engraving.*

**Below:**

*Costumes of the British Army.  
Coloured aquatint by J.W.  
Giles.*

LAST MONTH WE looked at the life and times of Brudenell, the first principal character in the drama of 'The Charge'. Here we examine the short and mixed career of Lewis Edward Nolan.



Archibald Nolan was destined to remain with the Austrian Army; the youngest Nolan, Edmond, was the first of the three brothers to be brought into British service when he was seventeen at a levée held in May 1837. However, after two years at a military college near Vienna the young Edmond decided to stay with the Austrian service and his name was removed from the list of those wanting commissions, his name being replaced by that of his elder brother Lewis Edward in 1839.

Lewis Edward Nolan had already passed out of the military college near Vienna, where he had gained a commission in the Imperial Austrian Cavalry. He was fully prepared to give this up for the chance of a commission in British service. Lewis Edward Nolan's cadetship had been brief, and by 1839 he had been senior Lieutenant in his regiment. He had a keen interest in engineering and pioneering, he could speak like a native German, Hungarian, Frenchman or Italian; he had a reputation as a splendid horseman, a skilled horsemaster and swordsman.

**Below:**

*Costume of the British Army.  
Coloured etching by William  
Heath circa 1827.*







Coloured lithograph entitled 'Dismounted officer holding a prancing charger', by H.D.E. Daubrawa circa 1827.

The purchase of an ensigny now proceeded. Three foot regiments were at first selected, the 30th, 36th and 37th where there were vacancies. In the case of the first mentioned regiment the sum of £450 was actually lodged, but the matter was never concluded. Then on 11 March 1839, Messrs Cox & Greenwood carried the business through, and Lewis Edward was gazetted to the 4th (King's Own Royal Lancaster) Regiment of Foot. However, at the urgent request of his father, Lewis Edward was transferred to the 15th Hussars on 23 April 1839, the 15th then being under orders for India, and his father was particularly interested in having him serve in that country.

The 15th Hussars arrived in India in 1840 and for thirteen years Nolan served in that country, obtaining his Lieutenancy on 19 June 1841 the post of riding master in August 1844, and securing his own troops in March 1850.

Whilst in India he acted as ADC to Lieutenant-General G.F. Berkeley, the Commander in Chief in Madras, and subsequently as extra ADC to Sir Henry Pottinger, the Governor.

Nolan also studied several of the native dialects, adding to his linguistic capabilities, and when the 15th were ordered back home he obtained leave and travelled throughout Russia, visiting many of the arms manufacturing areas of the south of that great country.

In 1851 his first book, *Cavalry, Its History and*

*Tactics*, was published. The book was to attract the attention of Horse Guards, increasing Nolan's reputation. Nolan also had another book published which ran to three editions, an adaptation of Monsieur Baucher's *Methode* on horses, which Nolan adopted to the training of British cavalry horses.

With the outbreak of the war in the Crimea, Nolan was sent ahead in order to purchase suitable remounts for the cavalry. He bought large numbers of Syrian horses, and received

the commendation of Lord Raglan who was most satisfied with his work.

Nolan was then appointed ADC to Sir Richard Airey, the Quartermaster General of the Army in the Crimea. The events connected with the charge of the Light Brigade are too well noted to need repeating here, but the downhill gallop of Nolan as he delivered the fateful message to Lord Lucan, excited the admiration of those who witnessed it. It has been said that on this last ride Nolan was mounted on a troop horse of the 13th Light Dragoons, but this has not yet been substantiated. From this last ride, however, the bridle, plume ornament and cloak used by him at Balaclava are preserved in the museum at the United Services Institute. The grave of Captain Lewis Edward Nolan is apparently not known and his name does not appear in the 'report of the Crimean cemeteries of December 1872'. There is, however, a marble scroll, erected to the memory of Lewis Edward Nolan in the North Isle of the Holy Trinity Church in Maidstone in Kent. **MI**



The British Army, 15th or King's Hussars, review order, India circa 1840, by M.A. Hayes.



# The Royal Guards of France 1661-1763

RENE CHARTRAND

CONCLUDING OUR survey of the French Royal Guards during the reigns of Louis XIV and XV, we look at the Gendarmerie de France and the intricate colours and standards carried by the various Guard formations.

## GENDARMERIE DE FRANCE

THE MEN AT ARMS of France. The cavalry of the *Gendarmerie de France* was a gathering of sixteen companies which acted as a reserve cavalry of the royal guard. They were involved in many battles and the reckless charges by the young gentlemen of the *Gendarmerie* made this particular division famous for its bravery. The *Gendarmerie* dated back to the 15th century when the Scottish Company was raised in 1422. It remained the sole company until 1647 when the *Gendarmes d'Orléans* and the *Chevaux-légers d'Orléans* were raised.

Louis XIV saw that, by expanding the *Gendarmerie*, he could keep good officers in the army who would otherwise have to be sent home at war's end, and would not be readily available when the next conflict broke out. Thus, after the end of a long war with Spain, in 1660, the *Gendarmes de la Reine* and the *Chevaux-Légers de la Reine* were raised for queen Marie-Thérèse. Thereafter, other *Gendarmes* and *Chevaux-Légers* companies were raised until the last five of its sixteen companies in 1690. Strength could vary from 80 up to 200 per company in wartime. Some companies were called *Gendarmes* while others would be *Chevaux-légers* but there was no real difference and all were heavy cavalry units. They were armed with pistols, a silver hilted heavy cavalry sword and a rifled carbine.

All companies had the same uniform which is described from the 1690s as an all red coat with silver buttons and a silver lace around the cuffs. There could be more or less lace depending on the king's wishes. For instance, at a review in 1698, the *Gendarmerie* is described wearing 'red with silver buttons and buttonholes, and a silver lace at the cuffs...'. Perhaps because of its expense during war, the silver lace was

omitted shortly thereafter and, during Queen Anne's War, silver lace was only worn on the coat cuffs. It was only around 1730 that more silver lace was added, edging the pockets and the front of the coat.

In the reign of Louis XIV, the waistcoat was of buff leather but thereafter it could be of buff cloth with silver buttons. A silver lace edging was added around 1730. This waistcoat silver lace was said to be mixed with black silk threads in the 1750s. The breeches and stockings were red and heavy black cavalry boots were worn. The hat was silver laced with a black cockade. The buff waistbelts were edged with silver lace.

Housings were red laced silver and embroidered with the cypher or badge of the Captain of each company. This meant the intertwined crowned 'L' for companies that had the king as captain but it could also be the badge of crowned dolphins for the *dauphin*, or, for the company of Burgundy, the ragged cross of that province.

Up to 1730, the shoulder bandolier to hook on the carbine was buff edged with silver for all companies. Thereafter, various colours were adopted by the companies. We list below the name of each company, the date it was raised, and the colour of the bandoliers for each.

*Gendarmes écossais du roi* (1422): yellow bandolier laced silver.

*Gendarmes anglais du roi* (1667): violet bandolier laced silver.

*Gendarmes bourguignon du roi* (1668): green bandolier laced silver.

*Gendarmes de Flandre du roi* (1673): orange bandolier laced silver.

*Gendarmes de la reine* (1660): red bandolier laced silver.

*Chevaux-légers de la reine* (1660): red bandolier laced silver.

*Gendarmes du dauphin* (1666): blue bandolier laced silver.

*Gendarmes de Bretagne* (1690): yellow bandolier laced silver.

*Chevaux-légers de Bretagne* (1690): violet bandolier laced silver.

*Gendarmerie d'Anjou* (1669): green bandolier laced silver.

*Chevaux-légers d'Anjou* (1689): orange bandolier laced silver.

*Gendarmes de Berry* (1690): red bandolier laced silver.

*Chevaux-légers de Berry* (1690): red bandolier laced silver.

*Gendarmes d'Orléans* (1647): blue bandolier laced silver.

*Chevaux-légers d'Orléans* (1647): blue bandolier laced silver.

As can be seen, some units of *Gendarmes* and of *Chevaux-légers* with the same designation had the same colours. To differentiate, the bandoliers of the *Chevaux-légers* would have a lighter hue (since they were 'light' cavalry, the reasoning went). For instance the *Chevaux-légers du dauphin* actually had a light blue bandolier.

The trumpeters and kettle-drummers of the *Gendarmerie de France* nearly all wore the king's livery with silver lace added in between the livery lace. However, those of the companies of *la reine* wore the queen's own livery, a red coat lined and cuffed with blue and a blue lace with a white chain, and silver lace as well. Those of *Orléans* also wore the red and blue livery of the duke with a lace of white with blue diamonds.

Officers had the same uniform as the men but their coats had more silver lace. In 1698, the officers were said to 'have wide silver brandebourg lace' on their coats. In the reign of Louis XV, they had silver lace at the buttonholes and at the seams of their all red coat.

Finally, we must stress that the *Gendarmerie* companies had nothing to do with police work right up to their disbandment in 1788. This was done by the *Maréchaussée* — the national police force. But the *Maréchaussée* had made a 'bad name' for itself by 1789 when revolution broke out. Therefore, in what we would call today a 'public relations' measure, the national police units switched

names and assumed the prestigious *Gendarmerie* title during the French Revolution. Eventually, this 15th century name for a Scottish mercenary guard unit spread to many countries all over the world, becoming synonymous with police forces.

## COLOURS AND STANDARDS

Regimental colours of the guards are another vast subject which we must only glance at. From 1661, all infantry regiments had a white Colonel's colour which was the French equivalent to the British King's Colours. The *drapeaux d'ordonnance* were the regimental colours and there was one per company (except grenadier companies) in guard regiments. Dimensions were about 2m10 to 2m25 square and they were fixed with gilt nails to a fairly short pole which was always held by an Ensign and did not rest on the ground. The longer poles seem to have been adopted after the reign of Louis XIV. The pole had a gilt spear and, from 1690, a white scarf. The cords and tassels were usually the same colours as the quarters.

The *Cent-Suisses* (see 'MI' 65) company had, under Louis XIV, a single colour having a white cross with EA EST FUDICIA GENTIS in gold letters, the first and fourth quarters blue with the crowned royal cypher with sceptre and the hand of Justice all in gold with a red ribbon, the second and third quarters red with a rock emerging from a stormy sea painted in natural colours. From about 1720, the first and fourth quarters strewn with gold lilies and the royal arms are at the centre of the cross.

The *Gardes-Françaises* (see 'MI' 65) had a Colonel's colour consisting of a white cross with a gold crown with red lining at the end of each arm, and white quarters. The company colours had a white cross with a gold crown with red lining at the end of each arm, and blue quarters strewn with gold lilies.

The *Gardes-Suisses* had a Colonel's colour which was completely white, both the cross and the quarters, and without any ornament. The company colours had a plain white cross, while the quarters in Swiss regiments had a distinc-



Troopers of the Chevaux-légers du dauphin and Gendarmes du dauphin, circa 1745. Although wearing

identical uniforms, there were subtle differences between a Chevau-léger and a Gendarme. The embroidered

cipher was more elaborate for the Gendarme while the bandolier of the Chevau-léger was of a lighter hue. The

Chevau-léger trooper seen from the back wears the buff vest in undress and shows how the carbine was hooked up.



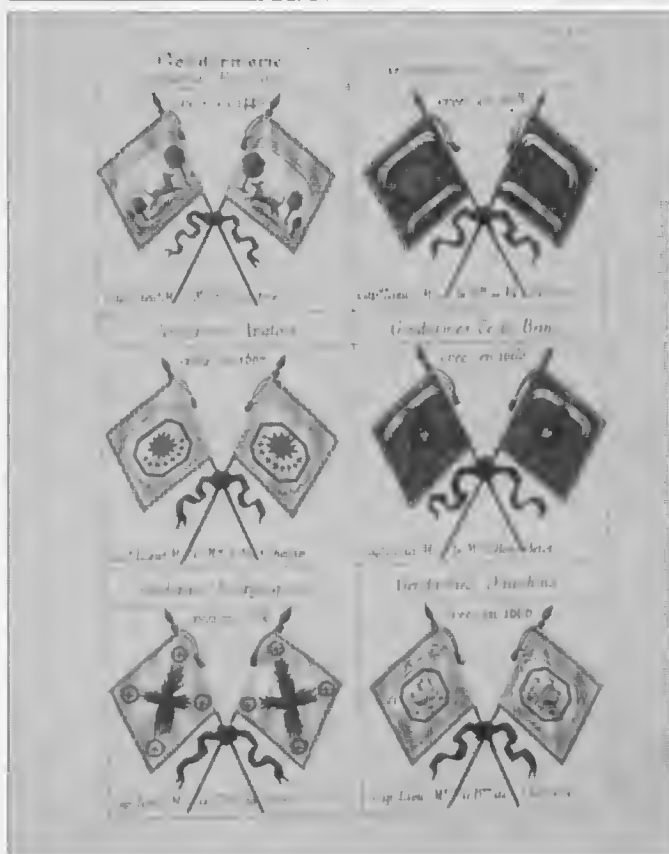


Kettle drummer and trumpeter of the Gendarmes Écossais, circa 1745. Nearly all companies of the Gendarmerie

de France had their musicians wearing the livery of the King, shown here. As can be seen, it was a superb dress, richly

laced with silver with the drum and trumpet banners beautifully embroidered. (Plates by Eugène Lelièvre,

reproduced by permission of Le Cimeter.)



Standards of the first six companies of the Gendarmerie de France. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University.)

tive design of several wavy flames pointing towards the centre. During the reign of Louis XIV, each quarter had blue, yellow and red wavy flames; from 1715 to 1762, the flames were black, golden yellow, red and light blue.

Cavalry standards were smaller, measuring about 100 to 105cm square, nailed on a pole of up to 315cm. Fringes and embroidery were in gold and silver.

**Gardes du Corps** (see 'MI' 62). Six standards per company to the colours of the bandoliers of each company: white, green, blue, yellow. Bearing golden royal sun embroidered on both sides, with the royal motto from 1740. Gold and silver fringes. All standards have identical design.

**Gendarmes de la garde** (see 'MI' 63). White standards with octagonal central panel bearing clouds and thunderbolts painted in natural colours. Silver scroll with motto JUBET IRATUS JUPITER. Gold and silver fringes. Both sides identical.

**Chevaux-légers de la garde** (see 'MI' 63). White standards with octagonal central panel bearing thunderbolts and giants painted in natural colours. Gold and silver embroidery and tro-

phies in the corners. Silver scroll with motto SENCERE GIGANTES. Gold and silver fringes. Both sides identical.

**Mousquetaires de la garde** (see 'MI' 64). 1st company: one white standard with light blue octagonal central panel bearing a flaming bomb falling on a city, painted in natural colours. Gold oak branch border, embroidery and trophies in the corners. Blue scroll with motto QUO RUIT ET LETHUM in gold. Gold and silver fringes. Both sides identical. The company also had a white colour for service on foot with the same decoration but with no fringes.

2nd company: one white standard with octagonal central panel bearing twelve arrows tied by a ribbon. Gold embroidery and trophies in the corners. Silver scroll with motto ALTERUS JOVIS ALTERA TELA. Gold fringes. Both sides identical. The company's white colour with the same central decoration but with variations elsewhere and no fringes.

**Grenadiers à cheval de la garde** (see 'MI' 63): one white standard with light blue octagonal central panel bearing an exploding bomb above a city, painted in natural colours. Embroidery and trophies in gold and silver. Blue scroll with motto UNDIQUE TERROR UNDIQUE LETHUM in crimson. Gold fringes. Both sides identical.

The sixteen companies of the Gendarmerie de France each

had distinctive standards, all very elaborate, the description of which would take several pages. Not all were the same colour and the standard's colour was not always the same as that of the company's bandoliers. We give below only the main features and motto of the standard of each company:

**Gendarmes écossais du roi:** white, three trees and a hare, IN OMNI HOMO FIDELIS, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Gendarmes anglais du roi:** white, a sun with seven small eagles, TUUS ADTE NOS VOCAT ARDOR, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Gendarmes bourguignon du roi:** white, red burgundy cross, no motto, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Gendarmes de Flandre du roi:** blue, a sun with rays, NEC PLURIBUS IMPAR, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Gendarmes de la reine:** red, the queen's arms, SEU PACEM SEU BELLA GERO, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Chevaux-légers de la reine:** red, the queen's arms, SEU PACEM SEU BELLA GERO, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Gendarmes du dauphin:** white, a ship in a storm with three dolphins, PERICULA LUDUS, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Chevaux-légers du dauphin:** white, a ship in a storm with three dolphins, PERICULA LUDUS, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Gendarmes de Bretagne:** blue, a large and a small tree, TRIUMPHALI STIPITE SURGIT, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Chevaux-légers de Bretagne:** blue, a bird flying and another on the ground, VIVIS SECTATURE EUNTEM, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Gendarmerie d'Anjou:** blue, two trees with a star and a ray, VIRTUTEM AUTORE REFERT, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Chevaux-légers d'Anjou:** blue, a tree and a star, VIRTUTEM AUTORE REFERT, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Gendarmes de Berry:** blue, a lion, VESTIGIA MAGNA SEQUUTUR, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Chevaux-légers de Berry:** blue, an eagle, QUO NON FERET INSITA VIRTUS, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Gendarmes d'Orléans:** red,

homb hursting, ALTER POST FULMINA TERROR, embroidered and fringed gold and silver.

**Chevaux-légers d'Orléans:** red, bomb bursting, ALTER POST FULMINA TERROR, embroidered and fringed gold and silver. **MI**

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## Acknowledgments

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# The Rise of the 'National Idea', 1815-1918

IN THE LATE 18th and early 19th centuries — when the newly independent American states were taking their first steps of nationhood and the 'national idea' was rippling outward from the French Revolution — the once unified Croatian nation found itself splintered and divided up by the great powers of south-eastern Europe, whose interests and boundaries criss-crossed Croatia's lands. These peoples were generally unnoticed and disenfranchised national minorities attempting to live and survive under the greater power holding sway over the political and economic life of their historic lands.

A large number of Croats continued to live in lands occupied by the Turks, in the Croatian areas of what is now Bosnia and Herzegovina. Here, during hundreds of years of occupation and a process of Islamization and Turkish feudalism, new cultural patterns had developed among those who remained, and a Muslim people came into being on European soil. Many Croatian boys, who had been taken from their homes to serve in the Sultan's army, were later rewarded with positions of influence in the Sultan's court and administration of the occupied lands. But most, as a

VELIMIR VUKSIC and DICK FISCHER

AFTER THE NAPOLEONIC Wars a wave of nationalist fervor swept Europe, resulting in the unification of Italy and Germany and the creation of the Austro-Hungarian Dual Monarchy. But the struggle for national status in Croatia, hampered by Serbian and Bosnian aspirations and confused by the presence of a large Moslem minority inherited from the days of Ottoman domination, led eventually to the assassination in Sarajevo and the tragedy of the First World War.

matter of survival, were forced to simply bow to the oppressive feudal system which the Turks had imposed on their land.

Secondly, parts of Dalmatia and some of the Adriatic islands had been linked to Venice's Italian possessions for centuries, having been wrested from the Turks (and civilian Croatian rule) long before. But with Venice's collapse in 1797, Dalmatia became subject to Austrian rule at the turn of the century. Then, with the Austrian Empire's initial defeats by Napoleon, the Croatian and Slovene territories were united in the newly formed Illyrian Provinces, which remained under French rule until reunited with Austria following the Congress of Vienna in 1815.

A third major region of

Croatia was under the Croatian Governor (*Ban*) and the ruling feudal nobility, with its representatives in the Croatian Parliament (*Sabor*). During the early 19th century, the Croatian nobility, besides being pressured by increasing social unrest on the part of the peasantry, was caught in a balancing act between the two primary powers of the Empire. The Austrian Habsburgs had for decades been introducing tighter and tighter centralism and absolutist policies throughout the Empire, which severely reduced the power of Croatia's nobles. Regional and local matters, such as imposing German as the official language, policies regarding religious observance, and local taxation, were being increasingly dictated by Vienna. This trend led a large number of

Croatia's nobility to adopt a pro-Hungary policy — finding common cause with their Hungarian counterparts in their opposition to Viennese absolutism. But this created its own problem, for by the turn of the century the 'national idea' was sweeping through Hungary, and a Hungarian national drive was underway — with official support — to 'Magyarize' what it saw to be its own territory, running from the Carpathian mountains to the Adriatic sea! According to the leaders of this movement, Croatia should be forced to adopt Hungarian as its language and fall under the centralised policies of Budapest. It was Croatia's weakened Governor and nobility who remained the primary opposition to these trends, desperately struggling to hold onto Croatian self-rule on its holdings.

A fourth partition was the Military Territory: the Habsburgs' huge military barracks under Imperial martial law, running the entire length of Croatia's border with the Turks, and administratively separate from the other Croatian lands (see 'MI' 65). Although the Turkish threat had long passed in this area, Vienna maintained this massive border territory as its own recruiting and training ground for troops to fight the Empire's other wars. It was largely by drawing on Croatian soldiers from these set-apart lands that Austria was able to maintain its wars against Napoleon through their many years of hostilities between 1792-1814.

Down on the southern tip of Dalmatia was yet a fifth partition of the Croatian nation. The Republic of Dubrovnik had managed for centuries to maintain its hold out as a Croatian land amidst its very powerful neighbors (Austria, Turkey and Venice) both by its favourable position and through shrewd



Within Austro-Hungary, Croatia was located under the administration of the Hungarian kingdom. Regular units belonged to the Austro-Hungarian Common Army and were responsible to the Ministry of War in Vienna, while the reserve units (*Honved*) reported to the Ministry in Budapest.



**Facing page:**  
**Alkar from the city of Sinj, around 1860.** Since the age of chivalry, Dalmatia has been hosting war games, of which the most popular is the so-called 'alka'. The alka is a metal ring suspended three metres above the ground, which cavalymen on the run attempt to pick off with their lance. Since 1715, when Sinj's citizens dealt the Turkish army a harsh defeat, the alka has been held annually to commemorate that victory. As of August of this year, Sinj will have hosted its 278th consecutive alka.

The dress of the alkar is a mixture of the oriental and western styles, such as were worn by the nobles of Croatia in the 19th century. The long, decorative, dark blue (almost

black) coat and trousers, calpack and boots were a part of the hussar's uniform which was worn by the insurrectionary yeomanry cavalry. (In the war of 1800 yeomanry were activated for the first time, when they were called up under the banner of the 1811 hussars.) In Dalmatia, they wore a broad oriental shawl over a lavishly decorated vest as well. The horse's equipment was strictly of Turkish origin. This can be explained by the fact that in their wars with the Turks a large number of excellent Turkish horses were captured, all outfitted in oriental style. The greatest attraction during the alka was to show off the horse equipment captured from the Turkish pasha himself.

**Below:**  
**General and Croatian Ban Josip Jelačić (1801-1859), around 1850.** During the time of the Hungarian revolution of 1848-1849, the Austrian Emperor appointed Jelačić Imperial Commissar and Supreme Commander of the armed forces in Hungary. In command of the 1st Croatian Corps in the beginning, and then later of the South Austrian Army, he took part in

numerous battles against the Hungarian forces, even personally leading several cavalry charges in critical moments. In the picture the governor (ban) is wearing a uniform with the colours, ribbons and medals of an Austrian general, is decorated in a mixture of Croatian and Hungarian styles, and wears a fur cap and red mantle of a Croatian nobleman's national dress.

'Serezhan' (German Seressaner), early 19th century. From the reorganisation of the Military Frontier in 1699, troops were founded to carry out police work, similarly to gendarmes. Among the border regiments was one troop of 'Serezhans', with about one hundred men. The Serezhans were the élite units which were permitted to wear national dress and carry the weapons of their choice, but which had to include a rifle, two pistols and a long Turkish knife or sabre. They maintained this distinction of dressing and arming themselves as they wanted until 1866. Apparently they were given this status because their task, among other things, was to hunt down bandits and deserters, for which civilian attire was most suitable.

The most interesting aspect of their equipment was their decorated vest, leather belt and decorative pouches. The leather belt had places to hold two pistols and a long Turkish knife, with a decorative cover keeping them secure. Many of these belts with their pistols have been preserved, and have

now become a part of Dalmatia's folk costumes. The pistols and knife were generally of oriental origin and lavishly decorated. The belt was designed so as to be able to quickly draw the pistol or knife. In war games, up until recently soldiers would compete as to who could most quickly draw their pistols with their right hand and hit two watermelons at a distance of twenty paces. That combination of weaponry was deadly in hand-to-hand combat, as the war cry, 'for the throat', attests.

Across the belt with the weapons is a separate belt with at least three pouches, one for bullets, another for gunpowder, and the third for lubrication oil. The belt could hold as many as six such pouches which, during peacetime, also contained their money and tobacco. The rest of the dress most often consisted of a white linen shirt, trousers of dark blue, brown or black rough homespun, a red woollen cloak, a small red cap or shawl wrapped around the head in oriental fashion, and light leather shoes.







### Croatians in the Austro-Hungarian army

In the years following their bitter defeat by Prussia in 1866, a law was introduced in Austria dividing the army into the Imperial Austrian army, and the Royal Croatian-Hungarian army. This was a common army with a common German language. The Royal Hungarian home guard (*honved*) with their Hungarian, and the Royal Croatian-Hungarian home guard with Croatian as its command language, were made subject to the Hungarian Defence Ministry. In 1871 the official Military Frontier was abolished, and in the succeeding reorganisation the 13th Austrian Corps was founded on the greater part of Croatia's present territory, with its headquarters in Zagreb. It consisted of infantry regiments: the 16th, in Bjelovar; the 53rd, in Zagreb; the 79th, in Petrovaradin; the 78th, in Osijek; the 79th, in Octočac; the 96th, in Karlovac, and the 31st Feldjäger battalion in Zagreb. Its cavalry consisted of the 5th Uhlans in Zagreb and the 12th Uhlans which were recruited in Varaždin and Sarajevo. Its artillery was made up of the 37th, 38th, and 39th field, 13th howitzer and 13th mountain regiments. The 16th Austrian Corps, with its headquarters in Dubrovnik, included the 22nd infantry regiment from Sinj and the Dalmatian Mounted Rifles from Zadar.

The Royal Croatian-Hungarian home guard consisted of these infantry regiments: the 25th, in Zagreb; the 26th, in Karlovac; the 27th in Sisak (with about 50% Serbs), and the 28th, in Osijek. Each of these cities contributed one squadron of cavalry to the 10th home guard (*domobran*) hussar regiment.

In Istria, which belonged to the 3rd Austrian Corps, Croatians were in the 97th infantry regiment and the 20th Feldjäger battalion. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the 4th Bosnian-Herzegovinian regiment, with its headquarters in Mostar, consisted mostly of Croatians from those parts. All together, these units were made up of 50,000 men and 116 cannons.

diplomacy. But in 1808, as Dalmatia fell under French rule, the Republic was abolished and incorporated in Napoleon's Illyrian Provinces.

No political analyst at the beginning of the 19th century could ever have suspected that these dispersed and unrelated parts would find one another again and be reunited. Years, decades, even centuries had locked these pieces into their respective places as minorities subject to alien rule. Their common national identity was increasingly but a memory, and any expectant hope for a reversal of fortunes was limited to dreamers only. But the century ahead of them was to give new impetus to these dreams.

### Illyrianism and national awakening

After Napoleon was defeated, the Austrian Empire could finally enjoy a 30-year period of peace, during which time it regained and strengthened its dominance over Croatian territories. Within civilian Croatia, both the Governor and all the leading politicians were historically of the nobility, whose interests also included retaining their privileges and property (particularly in light of the social pressures agitating for changes in the feudal system). As one of the smallest and least developed parts of the Empire, Croatia had little influence on the Viennese court's implementation of its absolutist policies. For this reason, many nobles, trying to be political realists, leaned for support towards Hungary, and were willing to make major concessions to the Hungarian court in order to gain its backing against Vienna. Among other things, they even consented to having the Hungarian language introduced as a compulsory subject in Croatian schools.

This proved to be the spark that awakened a broad popular movement of Croatian national aspirations, called Illyrianism, spearheaded, this time, not by the nobility, but by a new and educated élite and emerging bourgeoisie. It consisted of a revival of interest in Croatia's language and its historic national character, demands for an end to feudalism, voicing political options and hopes for eventual independence from the Empire as well as some kind of unification of the various South Slav lands.

This movement came to be known as the Croatian National Revival or Rebirth. Linguists and scholars, like

Ljudevit Gaj, began to standardise Croatia's various dialects into one literary language to be taught in the schools. Gaj laid the linguistic and intellectual groundwork for the movement through various scholarly works, published the first Croatian newspaper, *Novine horvatske*, in 1835, and opened up a printing shop in 1837. Leading poets lamented the pathetic state of the national consciousness. Politicians joined together to form common programme and political parties based on Croatian national aspirations. Count Janko Drašković put the plight of Croatia into print in 1832 in his *Dissertation*, and recommended a bold new direction for the nation. All of this led to a popular consensus for national independence — differing primarily as to whether that should be within the Empire or apart from it. Politicians like Eugen Kvaternik and Ante Starčević were able to state openly and eloquently what had been previously unprintable, and developed broad political followings. The Illyrian movement formed the modern conception of nationality among the Croatians, boldly demanding the unification of Croatia's fragmented territories. Others of them took up the banner of pan-Slavism, seeking common positions and interests with Serbs, Slovenes and other Slavic peoples.

Throughout the mid-19th century, there were several other major nationalistic currents running through the Croatian part of the Austrian Empire. Running counter to the Illyrian movement was the ground-swell in Hungary, with its aspirations for 'Magyarising' the Croatian lands, finding expression in the so-called Magyarone Party. Tension began to manifest itself with currents in neighbouring Serbia as well. Although the Illyrian movement generally favoured forging closer ties with Croatia's Serb neighbours, neither the Slovenes nor Serbs ever joined the movement. Under the leadership of the Serbian linguist, Vuk Karadžić, parallel development of language and literature was emanating from Serbia, which viewed the basic Croatian language and people as essentially a variant of Serbian, and which made any genuine collaboration between the movements impossible. This expansionist view of Serbia's legitimate territory sowed the seeds of deep conflict ahead, as it began making

claims that historic Croatian lands, such as Dalmatia and Slavonia, were in fact Serbian, and claimed Bosnia-Herzegovina as well.

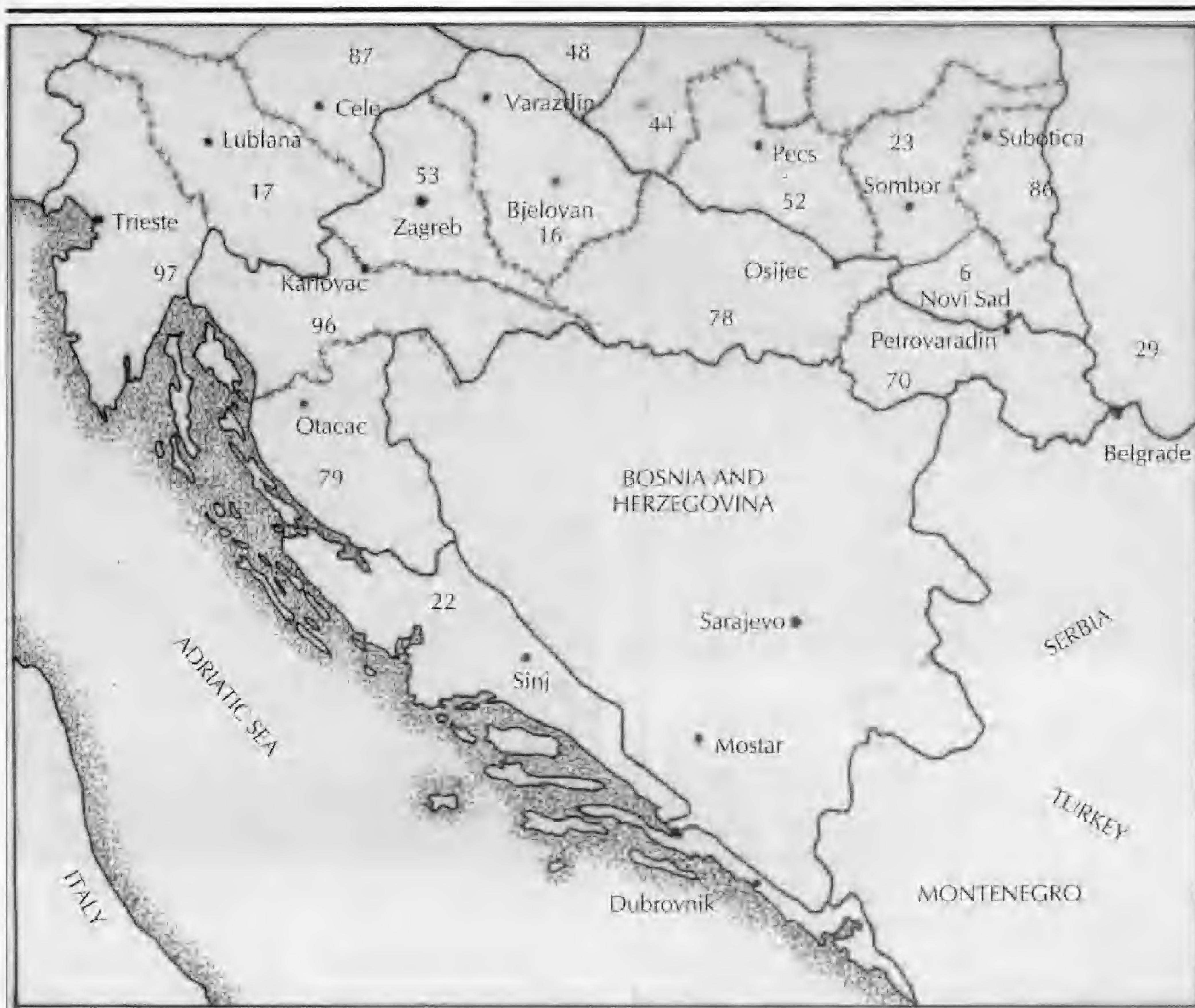
### The revolutions of 1848

The Austrian Empire under Metternich's guidance had long been the seat of Europe's political autocracy and conservatism when, in 1848, it was suddenly confronted by revolutions throughout its diverse lands. When Hungary rose in revolution and proclaimed its secession, the Viennese court appointed Colonel Josip Jelačić as Croatia's Governor. At the same time, in Zagreb, the popular Croatian National Assembly independently chose Jelačić as their Governor as well, and embraced *The Demands of the People*, a programme which embodied all the reasonable demands of the Illyrian movement: the independence and unification of all Croatian lands, abolition of feudalism, establishment of Croatian as the official language, etc, and which would restructure the Monarchy as a federal state of free and equal nations. But the Hungarians, who had insurrectionary plans of their own, rejected it outright. Relations between Croatia and Hungary soured and began to move towards war.

With the support of the Monarchy, Jelačić captured Hungarian-controlled Rijeka in late August, declared war on Hungary in September, and marched on the northern Croatian territory of Medjimurje, proclaiming it an integral part of civilian Croatia. Together with his troops from the Military Border Territory, he then marched toward Budapest. After engaging the Hungarian army in an inconclusive battle, Jelačić's army headed toward Vienna to help put out the revolution that had flared up there.

When the new Emperor Franz Joseph mounted the throne, he appointed Jelačić as Governor of all Dalmatia as well, with the effect that — since he was already in charge of the Military Territory — all of present day Croatia except for Istria and four Adriatic islands were under his rule. Although this 'unity' proved short-lived, it did heighten Croatian national awareness and contribute to the further use of the Croatian language in areas where it had not yet been implemented. As the Hungarian revolution flared up, Vienna called on Jelačić to suppress it under the Imperial banner. Swinging through Slavonia up into Hungary,





*Infantry Regiments Nr. 16, 22, 53, 70, 78, 79, and 96 were recruited from Croatian military territory, while some Croatian ethnic lands were located in the recruiting area for Regiments Nr. 23, 44, 52, and 97. Croats made up of 14% of the total Austro-Hungarian army and around 60% of its navy.*

Jelačić defeated the Hungarians in a series of battles, until they finally broke.

The result of this Imperial victory proved to be tragic for weakened Croatia once again. It was said that what the Hungarians received as a punishment for their disloyalty, Croatia received as a reward: imposition of absolutist, centralist rule.

#### **Post-revolutionary developments**

The Austrian Empire's problems with its discontented minorities refused to go away. In 1867 Austria entered an Agreement with Hungary, which transformed the Empire from a single state into a dual monarchy. This had major

implications for Croatia as the nation was administratively divided between the two monarchies, effectively once again denying its ethnic or territorial integrity. Over the final decades of the century, despite frustration over the policies of the big powers, significant political activity and numerous attempts at unification occurred with little dramatic result. One of their only victories was the abolition of the Military Frontier and its incorporation into Croatia in 1881. Nevertheless, the fruit of the Illyrian movement was impacting the spirit of the Croatian nation, through magazines and newspapers in Croatian, which continued to sow a sense of nationhood in parts where their political integration into their nation was still a long way off. The opening of the University of Zagreb in 1874 helped to both transform Zagreb as the nation's centre and to become a spreading point for national movements.

#### **Meanwhile down in Bosnia...**

Two related developments in the late 19th century are of spe-

cial interest to those trying to work through the thorny issues which have appeared at the end of the 20th century: the problems surrounding Bosnia and Herzegovina and the growing tension with Croatia's Serbian neighbours. Both prove to be complex and intertwined.

Living conditions stagnated or even deteriorated throughout Turkish controlled Bosnia, the last feudal stronghold in Europe, with its high taxes and harsh penalties causing widespread popular discontent. Numerous uprisings broke out, all seeking reforms, and sometimes even independence from the Turks. Although the Christian population was divided in their loyalties between Croatia and Serbia, over time Austria-Hungary grew more powerful economically and politically in these lands. From 1875-1878 a series of uprisings broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina with the consequence of massive numbers of refugees fleeing into Austrian-controlled Croatia. The Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, hoping to strengthen its sphere of influ-

ence in the Balkans and to counter a destabilising and increasingly expansionist Serbia, gained approval to oversee Bosnia-Herzegovina in the Treaty of Berlin of 1878 and formally annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908.

Many Croats rejoiced at these developments, hopefully expecting that they would finally be reunited in the first step of the creation of a south-Slav state within the Habsburg framework, with the new territory annexed to Croatia. But the Monarchy chose to keep Bosnia separate and prevent Croatia from expanding and becoming too great a challenge for Hungary. But since both Croatia and Serbia considered Bosnia-Herzegovina their own, the Austrian policy, instead of serving either party, became the flash point that led to the breakup of the Monarchy through its defeat in the First World War.

#### **Serbian-Croatian relations**

Although there continued to be major efforts on the part of numerous Croatian politicians to find common interest with



their neighbouring Serbs, tensions existed at numerous levels. Animosity between Serbs living in Croatia and Croats was aggravated by the 20 year term of the Hungarian, Khuen-Héderváry as Croatia's Governor (1883-1903). Attempting to forcibly subdue Croatian national aspirations through violent suppression of civil rights, breaking up the opposition parties and economic neglect, he pursued his policy of 'divide and rule' by openly favouring the Serbian minority over the Croats. One consequence of his government was a huge exodus of population through emigration.

By the early 20th century numerous movements were underway among influential intellectuals and politicians which promoted various policies of unity in the south (jugo) Slav lands. Men like Frano Supilo and Ante Trumbić worked to combine Serbian and Croatian political forces in anticipation of a collapse of the Monarchy, in order to be better positioned at that time to decide their own national fate. Their main aim was to pioneer cooperation between the Croatian, Hungarian and Serbian oppositions in gaining greater civil liberties and unification of Croatia's divided lands. Then, in 1906, a Croato-Serbian Coalition was formed, but which proved to be a short lived disappointment. In 1915 a group of Croatian, Slovenian and Serbian politicians who had emigrated abroad formed the Yugoslav Committee and tried with a united effort to salvage what they could out of the results of the war after the Empire's imminent defeat.

But in all these efforts, each party had a different agenda, and Croatia's age-old but reawakened dream of self-determination for its peoples and lands was about to be disappointed again. **MI**

**Private of the 53rd Regiment Erzherzog Leopold Ludwig, 1866.** In 1753 the 53rd regular regiment was founded out of the old Pandur Corps (see 'MI' 65) formed in 1742, which was made up of Croats and had its recruiting centre in Zagreb. During the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, from 1791 to 1814, the regiment was under the command of General Ivan Jelačić (Johann Jelačić de Buzim), father of the later Croatian Governor Josip Jelačić. During the Hungarian revolution, 1848-1849, it was commanded by

General Demetar Radošević (Demeter Radosseovich von Rados), while General Archduke Leopold commanded the regiment during the Austro-Prussian War of 1866. At the inception of Austro-Hungary in 1866, the regiment fell under the Hungarian recruiting district.

Zagreb belonged to the Croatian-Hungarian Kingdom within the Austrian Empire and, for that reason, the 53rd Regiment wore Austrian uniforms of the so-called Hungarian cut. That was also very likely the reason why the regiment's nationality was mistakenly designated as Hungarian.

In the 1866 war the Austrian line infantry wore their traditional white uniforms, with men of the Austrian recruiting districts wearing white trousers, while light blue trousers were worn by men from the Hungarian recruiting areas. The trousers of the Hungarian uniforms were tighter than those of the other units, and had a decorative black and yellow lace 'knot' at the top of the thigh. The Hungarian troops also wore short black boots with the trousers tucked into them. The other infantry wore black shoes. The greatcoat was grey or brown. When not being worn it was rolled and slung over the left shoulder. The headgear was a black shako with a brass badge and national cockade on the front. Very often there was an oak leaf stuck behind the cockade. The regimental facing colour was deep red with white buttons.



## BATTLEFIELDS FROM THE AIR

# Battle of the Somme: Gommencourt, 1916

MIKE McCORMAC

IN THIS LATEST of our occasional series we fly over the village of Gommencourt which was the objective of a costly British diversionary attack in July 1916.



SAY 'SOMME' AND people inevitably think of the horrendous losses suffered there during the summer and autumn of 1916. Probably some of the bloodiest fighting took place around the village of Gommencourt on the first day of the battle, there being almost 9,000 casualties in just one day's fighting. The irony was that the attack on Gommencourt was not a part of the Somme offensive in the accepted sense, it was merely a diversionary effort to take German attention away from the preparations further south.

The village of Gommencourt marked the northern extremity of the front during the Battle of the Somme. The village had been held by the Germans since the lines had become established in the area and, in common with eight other villages along what was the front line at the start of the battle, it was very strongly fortified. The German lines bulged out around the village taking in the woodland of Gommencourt Park to form a salient. The point of the woodland was marked before the battle by what was a famous oak tree, the 'Kaisereiche' or 'Kaiser's Oak'.

Facing the south-west of the Gommencourt salient, the village of Hébuterne was held by the 56th (London) Division of

Gommencourt Wood and Gommencourt. Looking north-west, with Foncquevillers in the background. This was the sector attacked by the 56th (London) Division, who succeeded in advancing as far as the track on the right of the picture before they were thrown back with heavy casualties.

the British Third Army. At that time the village consisted of one long street with a half-ruined church, a few run-down farms which had been abandoned by their farmers and some cottages which had been occupied by the army. The village had originally been fortified by the French and later by the British to become one of the strongpoints of this section of the lines. The front line ran parallel to the village's main street, a little to its east.

The village of Foncquevillers faced the north-west of the Gommencourt salient. It had been held by the 46th (North Midland) Division of the British Third Army for almost a year, during which time the troops who struggled with the French pronunciation of its name had christened it 'Fonky-villers'.

It was from the villages of Hébuterne and Foncquevillers that the Third Army attacked Gommencourt at the start of the





Somme offensive. The objective of the attack on Gommecourt by the British Third Army under General Sir Edmund Allenby had two objectives. The first was to eliminate the salient and the second was to divert German attentions away from the main thrust of the push by the Fourth Army to the south of Gommecourt astride the Albert to Bapaume road.

The details of the attack were planned by Lieutenant-General Snow. Rather than attack the salient head-on, he planned to attack and advance along its two sides with the aim of linking up behind the village, in the process cutting the salient off. The plan called for the 46th (North Midland) Division to attack from the north whilst the 56th (London) Division attacked from the south. It was planned that the attack should be preceded by the same artillery bombardment as that mounted by the Fourth Army to the south, and that the attack should be mounted at the same time. The factor which made Allenby's and Snow's task most difficult was that as their action was to be a diversion, it was critical that the Germans knew an attack on Gommecourt was being planned.

The preparations for the attack had to be obvious to the Germans, so during May a number of works were started to give the impression of enormous fortification of Hébuterne. These included building a new headquarters with associated roads, railways

and pipe lines being laid. Between Hébuterne and Gommecourt No Man's Land was up to 800 yards wide, so a new trench 2,000 yards long half way across was dug by the 56th (London) Division. It was from this new trench that the British emerged at 07:30 on 1 July, its advance position meaning that they had less distance to cover to reach the German trenches.

*Gommecourt Wood and Gommecourt. Looking east, the wood is on the right and the village in the centre. The German front lines lay along the nearer edge of both wooded areas. The trenches of the 46th (North Midland) Division lay across the fields in the foreground. The New Cemetery can be seen to the left of the village.*

As the attack started the men of the 46th (North Midland) Division who were attacking Gommecourt from the north were in trouble very quickly. They started at a disadvantage in that their area had been badly waterlogged by the rains over the previous days which meant that many of the men had to spend the night before the attack standing up to the knees or above in mud or water. To add to their difficulties, during the night the Germans had shelled their trenches causing many casualties. As they advanced it was discovered that the wire in front of the German trenches was mostly uncut and therefore almost impossible to pass. These problems were compounded by the extremely heavy machine-gun fire directed at the attackers by the

*Hébuterne and Gommecourt. Looking north-east, the village in the foreground is Hébuterne. Gommecourt Wood is in the centre upper part of the picture with Gommecourt itself just beyond. The village at top left is Foncquevillers. The German front line ran along the nearest edge of Gommecourt Wood. The 56th (London) Division attacked from Hébuterne towards the right of the wood and the 46th (North Midland) Division towards the Foncquevillers road.*

German defenders. The result was that the North Midlanders suffered very serious casualties. Many of the men died in No Man's Land and on the German wire. Within a short time the assault had ground to



a halt and the few British soldiers who had managed to reach the German positions were cut off and destroyed.

In contrast, to the south of Gommecourt, the attack by the 56th (London) Division started well. Five battalions attacked vigorously from the new trench that had been dug, capturing the German front line and advancing almost to the point where it was planned they would link up with the 46th (North Midland) Division. At that point the initiative was lost and the attackers paused to await reinforcement. At mid-day the Germans counter-attacked strongly with a heavy barrage and machine-gun fire. Many attempts were made to reinforce the attackers, but every attempt resulted in the annihilation of more men by the German machine-guns. As the afternoon and evening wore on the Germans continued the pressure, gradually wearing down the Londoners. By dusk the shattered remnants of the battalions returned to their own trenches leaving many dead comrades within the German positions they had captured earlier. All the ground that had been won was lost again by the end of the day. The Londoners had fought very well, but they had suffered huge losses.

The Third Army's attack on Gommecourt had not succeeded in taking the salient, but it provided the diversionary effort required. The Germans had suffered nearly 2,000 casualties during the day's fighting, but the British had suffered a staggering 6,769 casualties from some of the best of the Territorials in France.

Gommecourt remained in German hands for another eight months, finally falling on 27 February 1917. Even though over seven months had passed following the initial British attack, some decomposed bodies from the 46th (North Midland) Division were found on the German wire, whilst others were collected from No Man's Land.

Many of those from the 46th (North Midland) Division killed in the day's fighting are buried in Gommecourt Wood New Cemetery which is situated north-west of Gommecourt on the west side of the road to Foncquevillers. There is a memorial to the Division in the cemetery. Many of those from the 56th (London) Division killed at Gommecourt are buried in Gommecourt British Cemetery No 2 which is situated south east of Gommecourt west of the road to Puisieux.

**MI**

## WEAPONS

# The Luger Lange '08

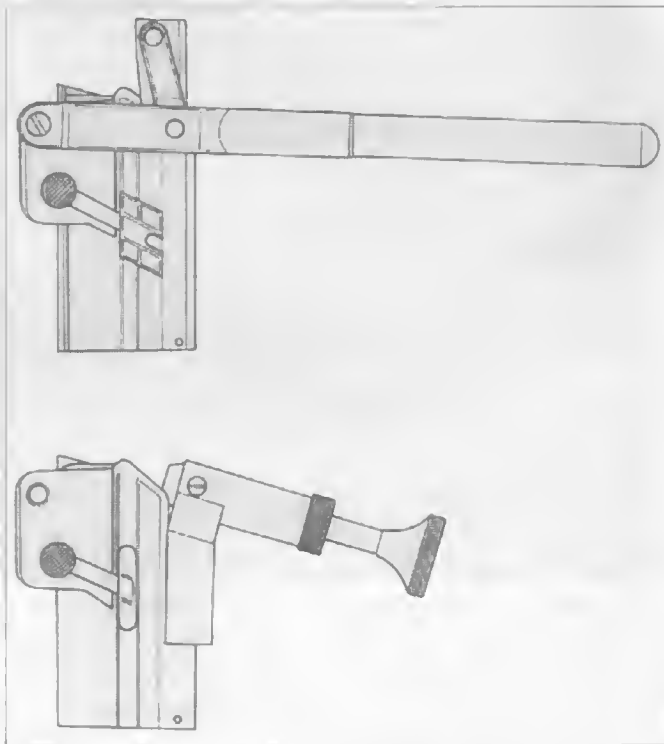
GUY and LEONARD A-R-WEST

### Loading the T.M.

A SPECIAL loading tool for loading the T.M. has to be used to insert all 32 cartridges. However, 10-11 cartridges (ogival pattern) can be loaded without the loading tool with little difficulty. To load, the helical spring has first to be fully compressed using the winding lever which is extended or unfolded depending on model. A very firm grip is made on the feedway and the lever is wound clockwise approximately 310°, and locked into a slot in the drum body with the sprung stud. Great care has to be exercised during winding as the spring is very powerful and could cause injury if the stud is not fully locked into its slot. The lever is folded back and the loading tool placed on the mouth of the feedway; it locks into position by a 'press-stud' which engages a slot on the right side of the feedway. Cartridges are then inserted and compressed into the feedway using the lever until fully loaded. The loading tool is then removed and the winding lever unfolded and pulled clockwise to release the press-stud from its slot and then carefully unwound.

T.M. cover is made from coarse grey canvas. It is a similar to the material used for *pickelhaube* covers and bread

IN THE FIRST of two articles on the famous 'long barrel' Luger we examined its history, construction and accessories. This month we look at ammunition, loading and firing.

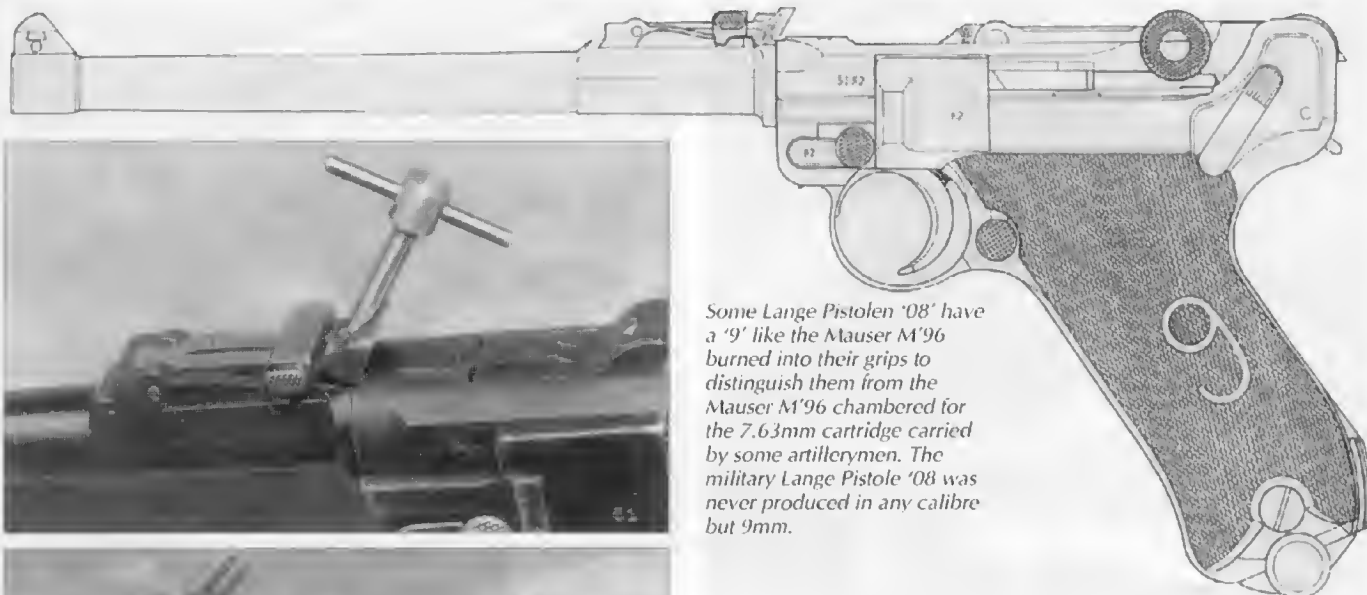


**Above:** T.M. loading (above) and unloading tool (below); the latter was most probably modified after the First World

**Below:** War from a loading tool. Shooting the L.P.'08 at 100 metres with complete rig, and the sights adjusted.







Some Lange Pistolen '08' have a '9' like the Mauser M'96 burned into their grips to distinguish them from the Mauser M'96 chambered for the 7.63mm cartridge carried by some artillerymen. The military Lange Pistole '08 was never produced in any calibre but 9mm.



a) The rearsight and b) foresight being adjusted by set-screw with the special capstan tool.

bags (brotbeutel). Two brown leather straps are used: one for attaching to the belt and the other for securing the flap. In addition, the flap has two grey metal buttons (some examples lack buttons). Two magazines were usually carried in canvas bags suspended from the left side of the waist belt. Leather covers are also known to exist.

Of interest, we have a lanyard that was attached to an L.P.'08 which is assumed to be an original accessory. The holster for this pistol has been altered to hang from the waist belt. On close examination the hanging strap was used cut into two loops and sewn onto the back of the holster; an unofficial modification which is occasionally encountered. So probably with the loss of the hanging strap which also acted as a lanyard, a lanyard was then found necessary. It is uncertain whether lanyards were 'officially' issued with the P.'08 which is surprising as they were all equipped with a lanyard loop. It is possible,

however, that lanyards were only issued to the cavalry as was the case with the M.79 revolver. The lanyard in question is made from a 5mm (0.2") diameter round dark brown leather, 94.5cm (3.1ft) long and looped with two sliding leather ring adjusters, brass stud and fittings. It can also be used as a steady for shooting without the shoulder stock for the lanyard loop on the pistol is just below the bore axis. It must be looped under the left

shoulder and around the right side of the neck and then held at arm's length with the lanyard fully tensioned. To date no original data on the lanyard seems to be available.

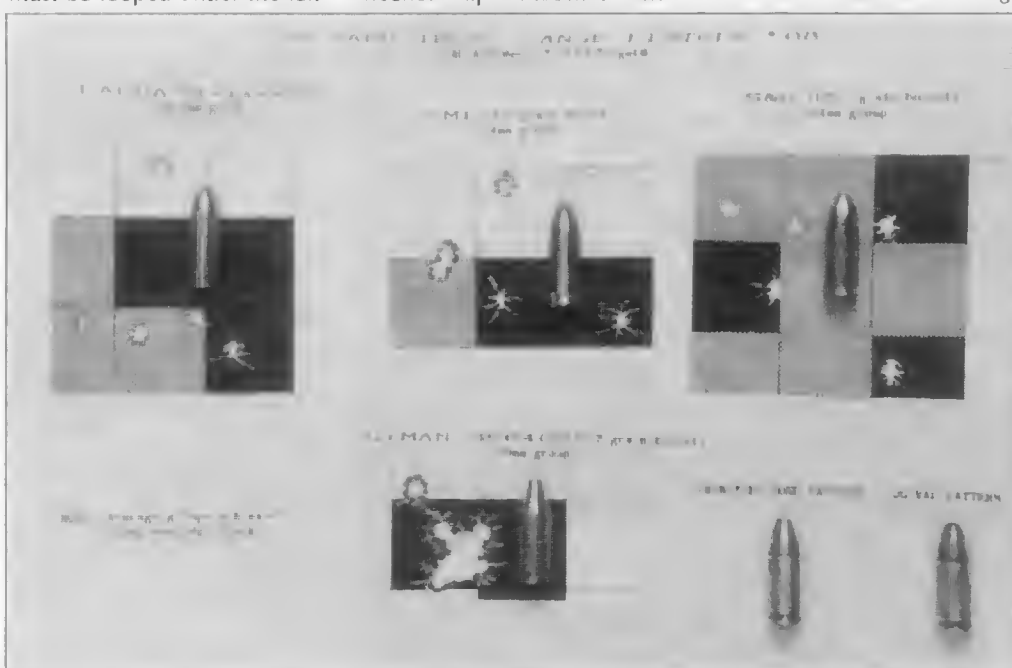
#### 9mm Parabellum

The 9mm cartridge was developed from the 7.65mm Parabellum to improve on the 'stopping power' and to provide a larger diameter bullet at a comparable velocity. The 9mm Parabellum is simply a 'necked up' 7.65mm and

cases shared the same length, case head and rim dimensions. The 9mm Parabellum, developed by Georg Luger in 1902, was later officially designated Pistolenpatrone '08 (Pist. Patr.'08). Two basic types of bullet were used during the First World War: the steel jacketed nickel coated truncated cone pattern which contravened the Hague convention and was replaced in the summer of 1916 by the steel jacketed copper coated ogival pattern; both had a lead core. Cartridges were packed in cartons of 16. The labels are blue and the title, date, year, lot, powder type, manufacturer, primer and batch number are printed in black Fraktur (Gothic). A typical label would read:

16 Scharfe Pistolenpatronen 08  
Gerfertigt am 7 Mai 17. M.W.  
P.P.R. (2708) 1. L. 16 Zdh D.N. 16.  
Hülsen M.W. Geschoss M.W. og.

Groups achieved during testing using respective ammunition at 25 yards. All the ammunition functioned perfectly. Note the original truncated cone and ogival pattern at bottom right-hand side.





a



b



c

Stripping the L.P.'08 for cleaning and routine maintenance is very simple, no tools are required. Remove the magazine. Check the extractor-load indicator is not up showing 'GELADEN' (loaded).

If a cartridge is chambered, cycle the action several times to make sure the pistol is cleared.

a) Push in the barrel assembly back 'out of battery' until the toggle touches the ramp and



d



e



f

hold, turn the trigger-plate locking lever down 90°. b) Hold barrel assembly and lift trigger-plate forward to free flange. c) Slowly slide the barrel assembly forward and off the frame (note coupling

link arrowed). d) Lift toggle slightly and remove large cross pin. e) Slide breechblock assembly back simultaneously easing toggle over ramp. f) L.P.'08 field stripped.

## Shooting

For accuracy and velocity testing purposes, the pistol was sand bag rested on a bench and a chronograph positioned ten feet from the muzzle.

Short range testing was performed at an indoor 25 metres and for long range, the 100 metre Short Siberia at Bisley. The pistol was also shot with its shoulder stock as it was originally intended to be used and shooting was carried out in a slow and deliberate manner so as not to heat up the barrel excessively. The target used

was our 100 yard 11 x 15" grid for assessing group sizes only. Cases ejected vertically well over the firer's head, evenly without case damage and landed a couple of feet behind.

Being a contemporary design and utilised by the German military we used a 9mm Mauser M96 for comparisons, also fitted with its shoulder stock. The L.P.'08 shoulder stock attachment is far more rigid than that of the Mauser and in our opinion the stock is more comfortable to use; also, one does not feel so intimidat-

ed by the hammer of the latter catching the web of the hand. The Mauser is far quicker and easier to remove from its harness and attach to the stock. Its rear sight is closer to the eye and has a better sight radius of 241mm (9.5"). The sight picture of the L.P.'08 is good, being similar to that of the karabiner '98. The Mauser M96 trigger pull is a crisp 1.81kg (4lb) without a hint of creep. Both pistols are equally wieldy and surprisingly accurate.

We found the L.P.'08 poten-

tially more accurate than the Mauser at the longer range it was intended to be used at by virtue of its adjustable sights and longer barrel. The L.P.'08 is quicker and easier to load with the standard magazines.

A standard 1916 DWM P.'08 with identical 8.82mm bore and bore condition was selected for velocity and handling comparisons without shoulder stock. The P.'08 points well and has a distinctly sharp recoil but the jump is directly upwards and the muzzle returns quickly for follow-



## DATA ON TEST L.P.'08

Manufacturer: DWM.  
 Serial No: 8251 a.  
 Date: 1917.  
 Barrel length: 202mm (7.95") taken from breechblock to muzzle crown.  
 Groove diameter: 9.106mm (3585") *actual* dimension measured.  
 Bore diameter: 8.89mm (35") *actual* dimension measured.  
 Rifling: 6 right hand.  
 Rate of twist: 1 turn in 249.9mm (9.84").  
 Overall length: 318mm (12.52").  
 Width: 38.5mm (1.516").  
 Height: 136.7mm (5.38") with standard magazine.  
 Weight: 1,025g (36oz) with empty magazine.  
 Weight: 1,121.67g (39.6oz) with full magazine.  
 Foresight: Unprotected adjustable barleycorn.  
 Foresight: Unprotected adjustable barleycorn.  
 Rearsight: Adjustable leaf sight 100-800m with bullet drift.  
 Sight radius: 179mm (7.047").  
 Trigger pull: 1.81kg (4lb).

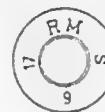
## TRUNCATED CONE PATTERN

Overall length: 28.96mm (1.14").  
 Bullet: Steel jacketed nickel coated.  
 Bullet weight: 7.9 grams (123.3 grains).  
 Bullet diameter: 9mm (.3545").  
 Bullet length: 14.94mm (.588").  
 Bearing length: 7.88mm (.310").  
 Primer: Berdan.  
 Cartridge weight: 12.07 g (186.4 grains).  
 Case headstamp: DWM 115. Deutsche Waffen & Munitionsfabriken AG Karlsruhe, January 1915.  
 Comments: Bullet base stamped 'DM', and case annulus painted black.

Truncated  
cone



Ogival



## OGIVAL PATTERN

Overall length: 29.54mm (1.163").  
 Bullet: Steel jacketed copper coated.  
 Bullet weight: 8.00g (123.5 grains).  
 Bullet diameter: 9mm (.3545").  
 Bullet length: 15.44mm (.608").  
 Bearing length: 4.67mm (.185").  
 Primer: Berdan.  
 Cartridge weight: 12.09g (186.6 grains).  
 Case headstamp: RM 5 6 17. Metallwarren & Maschinenfabrik AG Sommerda, June 1915.  
 Comments: Bullet base is not stamped, and case annulus not painted.

up shots; by comparison the L.P.'08 is slightly muzzle heavy with a soft recoil and as can be expected follow-up shots are slower. Velocity difference using a chronograph is 150 fps at ten feet from the muzzle.

Neither type of original ammunition was used for the tests as they are too rare and valuable. Ammunition commercially available was used starting with the lightest:

Bullet weights: IMI: 115.0 grains; S&B: 115.7 grains; Lapua: 116.4 grains.

Velocity 8" barrel at ten feet from barrel: IMI: 363.93 m/s (1,194 fps); S&B: 418.18 m/s (1,372 fps); Lapua: 347.8 m/s (1,141 fps).

Group 25 yards: IMI: 54mm (2.12"); S&B: 64mm (2.51"); Lapua: 56.5mm (2.20").

Group 100 metres: IMI: 218mm (8.58"); S&B: 258mm (10.16"); Lapua: 227mm (9").

All cartridges functioned flawlessly throughout the entire test, a true credit to this Teutonic pistol, but it must be taken into account that the testing was conducted in ideal shooting conditions. (Note: The above bullets are a bit light for 100 metre shooting and were affected by crosswind.)

Our handloaded cartridge especially being developed for the Classic Pistol Shoulder-Stocked 200 yard competitions uses a cast alloy Lyman 356402 truncated cone bullet.

This bullet closely resembles the truncated cone pattern, propelled by Nobel-2 Pistol powder and provided the best accuracy: 30mm (1.18") at 25 yards and 127mm (5") at 100 metres. This bullet functions flawlessly in the standard magazine but persistently jams when used in the T.M.

### Handling

The trigger pull is the characteristic 'Luger creep' and broke at an average of 1.81 kg. (4lb as with the Mauser M96). Recoil is relatively light without the shoulder stock and hardly noticeable when attached. The pistol fits quite naturally in the hand and is exceedingly comfortable to hold despite the long barrel. The L.P.'08 without its shoulder stock is more difficult to shoot accurately than the P.'08 and unstocked Mauser M96 because of its longer barrel\* and requires practice and time to become proficient. If the pistol is not held firmly without the shoulder stock when using low powered ammunition it will not function properly. The inertia of the long barrel and tangent

rear sight does have an effect on functioning. We have never experienced this with the standard P.'08 using the same ammunition. The adjustable sight's features are particularly useful to the handloader when using different bullet weights for competition. Handling with the T.M. makes the L.P.'08 bulky but

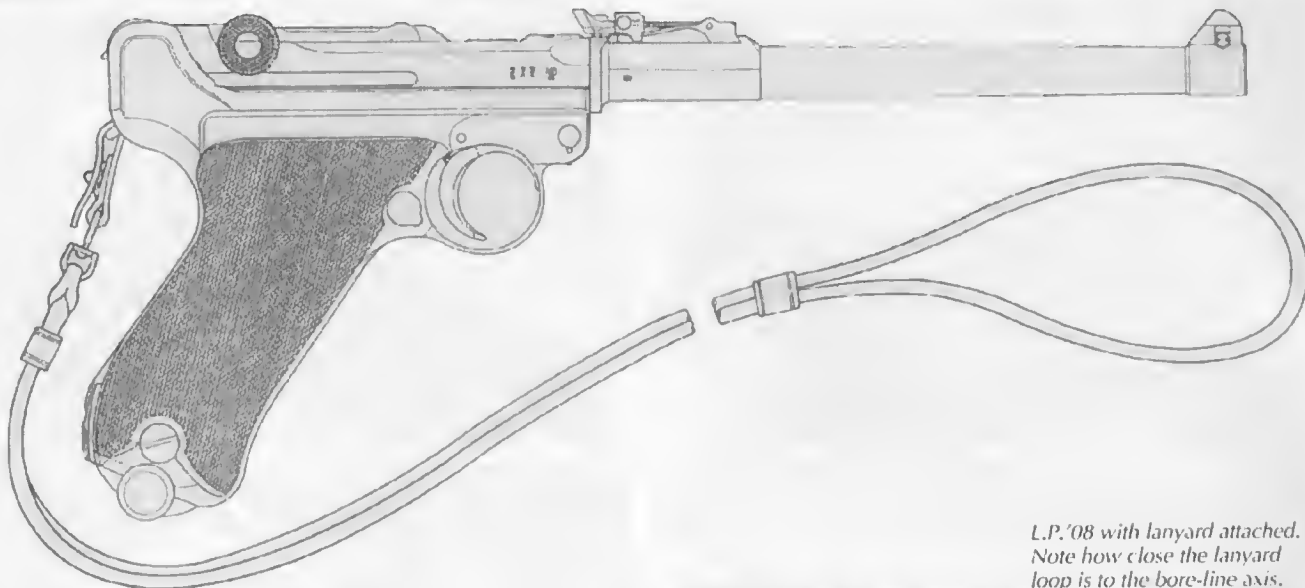
not as bad as one might assume, and when shooting offhand hardly affects the balance.

When running, the rig tended to bounce about and got in the way. With the Mauser M96 this was not a problem as it was suspended from the waist belt but the pistol rattled noisily in its wood-body hol-

\*Longer barrels require a steadier hold as the bullet takes longer to exit the muzzle.

View showing unloaded chamber (above) and loaded below. 'Geladen' (arrowed) is displayed on the extractor-load indicator when a cartridge is chambered.





*L.P.'08 with lanyard attached. Note how close the lanyard loop is to the bore-line axis.*

ster. The shoulder stock *does* undoubtedly improve control when shooting rapidly, and when attached, the weight of the T.M. reduces the effect of recoil to almost nil allowing aim to be kept on target with very little effort.

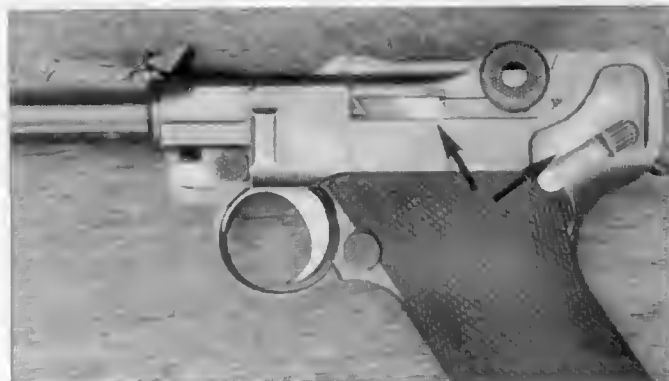
#### **Conclusion**

Today, an L.P.'08 in good shooting condition with matching numbers complete with its shoulder stock, cleaning tool and its screwdriver combination tool will command a very high price indeed. Accessories such as the T.M., loading tool and leather magazine pouches are rarely seen outside collections and are also scarce and very expensive. Reproduction holsters, stocks and magazine pouches are available but the collector must be wary of reproductions being sold as 'genuine items'. The L.P.'08 fills a gap for the person who enjoys shooting something larger than .22" rifle without the inevitable heavy recoil; until fairly recently this was a role the the M1 carbine used to fill. Its modest weight and dimension make it a pleasure to shoot, but its performance must not be directly compared with that of a carbine or short rifle. Some collectors are justifiably reluctant to shoot their L.P.'08s as wear and tear takes its toll of their cherished possession, spare parts become increasingly difficult to obtain and of course more expensive. This is where a reproduction pistol would undoubtedly be

popular. For anybody interested in shooting in the classic events, handloading the L.P.'08 with cast alloy bullets is rewarding, less wearing to the bore (and pocket) with attainable accuracy. For information on handloading please contact the authors via the editor.

Without doubt there is still a great amount of information still to be discovered about the L.P.'08, some of which will shake up 'established facts'. **M**

We would like to thank Reg M. Homard, John Baines and Cliff Skinner for access to their collections and kind assistance.



*The safety lever has been applied displaying 'Gesichert' (arrowed). Note the raised safety bar (arrowed).*



*If a shoulder stock is not available a lanyard is a useful aid for longer range shooting. Note the toggle opening; the pistol has just fired and the ejecting case can just be seen emerging (arrowed).*



# The Egyptian Campaign: 1882: Opening Rounds

UNTIL 1869, the British Government had displayed little interest in Egypt, other than as a stage in the overland route to India, but in that year the Suez Canal was opened. Although the building of the canal had been financed largely by France, it quickly assumed considerable importance to Britain since it provided the shortest and quickest sea route to the Empire in India and the Far East. As a result, in order to acquire some influence in the running of a vital part of Britain's maritime routes, in 1875 Disraeli, the Prime Minister, negotiated the purchase of the Khedive of Egypt's majority share holding in the Canal Company for £4 million.

At this time, Egypt was still nominally a province of the Ottoman Empire, but it was ruled by an hereditary Viceroy, the Khedive. By 1876, the Khedive Ismail, due to his effort to 'Westernise' Egypt and his own personal extravagances, had accumulated, for those days, the immense international debt of £94 million, most of which was owing to British and French financiers. Since the

*A woodcut of a naval party landed at Alexandria after the bombardment.*

CARLTON WRIGLEY

WHEN EGYPTIAN nationalists rebelled against the Anglo-French Commissioners and massacred European civilians in Alexandria, a military expedition under General Sir Garnet Wolseley was despatched to put down the dissidents and secure the Suez Canal. Here we look at events up to the battle of Kassassin in September 1882.

Khedive was unable even to maintain the interest repayments on this debt, the European nations authorised Britain and France to send Commissioners to Egypt to oversee the administration of Egypt's finances in order to secure repayment of the debt. Ismail's continuing extravagances, however, did little to alleviate the situation and, in 1879, the European Powers prevailed on the Sultan of Turkey, the Khedive's nominal overlord, to force Ismail to abdicate in favour of his son, Tewfiq.

After his accession, Tewfiq adopted a more co-operative attitude to the British and French Commissioners, but this in turn fostered the growth of a strong military faction in Egypt with nationalistic aims, led by Colonel Ahmed Arabi, Arabi Pasha. As the nationalist move-

ment received growing popular support, Arabi was in a strong position to force the Khedive to make Ministerial changes, appointing Arabi's nominees to government posts, and Arabi himself became Minister of War. These government changes made the position of the British and French Commissioners and their officials untenable and, at the behest of Britain and France, a Conference of European Powers was convened at Constantinople to attempt to resolve the situation regarding the debt repayment. Whilst the Conference was still discussing Egypt, events in that country significantly deteriorated on 11 June when an Egyptian mob, incited by the nationalist element, attacked the European residents in Alexandria, killing fifty of them.

Britain and France had both

previously despatched a fleet to Alexandria, hoping that a Naval presence would prevent any mob violence, but after the anti-European riots, France was unwilling to take any joint military action with Britain. It was also evident that the Egyptians were strengthening their coastal defences at Alexandria, and when the British Government was made aware of this, Admiral Sir Beauchamp Seymour, commanding the British Fleet of Alexandria, was authorised to send an ultimatum to the Egyptian authorities to cease the fortification of the Alexandria coast defences. This ultimatum was ignored, and on 11 July, the British Fleet bombarded the coastal defences. After the bombardment, landing parties from the Fleet were put ashore and were able to restore civil order and evacuate most of the European population.

The bombardment of Alexandria now put the onus on Britain to resolve the Egyptian situation, since France had opted out of any direct action. Gladstone's Liberal Government, by 24 July, had decided to despatch an Army Corps to Egypt to both restore the authority of the Khedive by the defeat of Arabi and his supporters, and to ensure the continuing control of the Egyptian finances.

The force was to be drawn mainly from Britain, with a contingent from the Army in India. Command of the Army Corps was given to General Sir Garnet Wolseley who, as early as 29 June, had presented to the War Office, a plan for operations against Egypt. This plan envisaged that the main troop landings would be at Ismailia which would provide the shortest route to Cairo, the Army Corps objective, and also ensure the safety of the Suez Canal for international shipping. From being given the command on 29 July, Wolseley's meticulous planning was crucial to accomplish the despatch from Britain and the Mediterranean bases of the 30,000 troops of all arms required for the operation,

*A woodcut, originally published in the Illustrated London News and The Graphic depicting HMSs Sultan, Superb, Inflexible and Temeraire during the bombardment of Alexandria.*





*An oil painting by Captain G. Martyr (2nd Battalion, DCLI) of a bugler of the battalion.*

together with their equipment, between 30 July and 12 August.

General Alison's Brigade from Cyprus, which consisted of the 1st Battalion The Staffordshire Regiment; 3rd Battalion The King's Royal Rifle Corps; 2nd Battalion The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry and 17 Company, Royal Engineers, reached Alexandria on 17 July. The following day a battalion of Royal Marine Light Infantry and a detachment of the Sussex Regiment joined Alison's Brigade, and after landing, the Brigade occupied Rameleh and the surrounding high ground, thus ensuring the safety of Alexandria from an Egyptian attack.

General Wolseley arrived at Alexandria on 15 August, and following a meeting with Admiral Seymour, his plan for the movement of the major part of the assembling Army Corps to Ismailia was agreed. On 20 August, a Royal Navy squadron seized control of the entire length of the Suez Canal, together with the towns of Port Said, Kantara, Ismailia and, in the south, Shaluf. To cover the troop movement to Ismailia, Wolseley had agreed with Admiral Seymour that the Navy would bombard the Aboukir defences, whilst General Hamley's Division, which was

initially to be left at Alexandria, would mount an attack on the Egyptian positions at Kafr-el-Dawar. Under cover of these distractions the main body was re-embarked on 18 August. The convoy arrived off Ismailia on 20 August, and the first troops were landed during the night of 20/21 August. By 23 August, the 9,000-strong Brigade group which was to form the advance guard had been landed. Wolseley was now able to move these troops forward along the line of the Sweetwater Canal and the Ismailia/Cairo railway, to occupy and consolidate the territory up to striking distance of Tel-el-Kebir, where the Egyptians had formed their main defence position.

Whilst the base was being established at Ismailia, some concern was caused on 22 August when it was discovered that the water level in the Sweetwater Canal had fallen drastically. With a shortage of transport animals, the canal was crucial as a transport route for the massive amount of supplies required, until such time as the railway could be brought into use. Intelligence established that the fall in water level was due to a dam that the Egyptians had built across the Canal at Magfar. Major-General Graham, commanding the advance guard, had reached Nefiche, and on 24 August additional troops were sent forward to join him there. His force now consisted of: three Squadrons of Household Cavalry, a detachment of 19th Hussars, two guns of 'N' Battery, 'A' Brigade, Royal Horse Artillery, 2nd Battalion Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, 2nd Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment, a detachment of Mounted Infantry and a detachment of Royal Marine Artillery. General Graham was ordered to move ahead to Magfar and take up a position there, so that the dam could be destroyed. The march from Nefiche caused problems for both the infantry and the artillery, due to the soft sand, but the cavalry was able to push ahead, and drive the enemy outposts at Magfar back towards Tel-el-Mahuta. General Wolseley was with the cavalry, and he was able to see that the enemy were holding Tel-el-Mahuta in some strength and had constructed another dam there.

This posed a threat to the build-up of troops and supplies at Magfar, and Wolseley decided that the enemy must be forced back, which would then open the way to Kassassin, a

suitable base for the eventual attacks on the Egyptian positions at Tel-el-Kebir.

Orders were sent to Ismailia for the immediate despatch to Magfar of the Guards Brigade, 'A' Battery, 1st Brigade, Royal Field Artillery, and any cavalry that were ready to move. The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, who had been left at Nefiche, were ordered up to Magfar. The troops at Magfar were placed in a defensive position, the York and Lancaster Regiment holding a line with their left on the Sweetwater Canal and crossing the railway. To their right were sited the two guns of 'N' Battery, RHA, and the Royal Marine Artillery detachment. The right of the position was covered by the cavalry and the Mounted Infantry. General Wolseley anticipated that the Egyptians would attack the position, since they would be aware of the limited number of troops at Magfar, but he was confident that the position could be held until the reinforcements arrived, when he planned to mount a vigorous counter attack.

Shortly before 09:00 the enemy were observed to be advancing in strength from Tel-el-Mahuta, eventually taking up a position on some slightly higher ground, within artillery range. The four field guns with the enemy force opened fire

shortly after 09:00. The York and Lancaster Regiment was behind good cover and the two guns of 'N' Battery were sited behind sandy hillocks. The enemy artillery fire caused few casualties, the shrapnel shells bursting too high, whilst most of the percussion shells buried themselves, without exploding, in the soft sand.

Under cover of this fire, the Egyptian infantry attempted an attack from south of the canal on the York and Lancaster Regiment's left. This was repelled by sustained rifle fire. An attack on the British right was equally unsuccessful, being repulsed by the Mounted Infantry. Following this attack the enemy concentrated their artillery fire against the cavalry and Mounted Infantry, who were obliged to withdraw to a more protected position. Up to this point, the Section of 'N' RHA had been ordered to hold their fire since they only had limber ammunition, their reserves not having come up, but at 10:30 the gunners were given permission to commence counter-battery fire, the accuracy of which forced the Egyptian battery to withdraw.

Meanwhile, enemy reinforcements, including a field battery equipped with Krupp guns, had arrived by rail. The enemy continued to put pressure on the British right, the Krupp battery coming into action at a point from whence their fire would enfilade the defenders. General Willis realigned the right flank, allocating one of two Gatling guns, manned by sailors from HMS Orion, and one of 'N' Battery's

*Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry officer's scarlet serge-trock, with the contemporary Sam Browne equipment of the pattern used during the Egyptian Campaign.*







Watercolour by R. Simkin depicting Private Harris of 2nd Battalion, DCLI, serving with the Mounted Infantry, defending his wounded officer during the action at Kassassin.

guns to that flank.

Although the enemy maintained pressure on the defenders during the morning, the situation was still static at 13:00, and the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry on arrival were held in reserve. At 18:20 the reinforcements from Ismailia arrived. These comprised the remainder of 'N' Battery, RHA, the Guards Brigade and detachments of the 4th and 7th Dragoon Guards. Wolseley's orders to General Willis were to maintain the position during the night, and to attack at dawn the following day. During the night, the troops at Magfar were further augmented by the arrival of 'A' Battery, 1st Brigade, Royal Field Artillery.

The British counter attack began at 05:30 on the morning of 25 August. With the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, the York and Lancaster Regiment and the Royal Marine Artillery, General Graham advanced along the line of the Sweetwater Canal and the railway, whilst to his right the Guards Brigade moved forward with parade ground precision. 'A' Battery was in support of the infantry, and in the rear were 3rd Battalion King's Royal Rifle

Corps and a battalion of Royal Marine Light Infantry, both units having joined the force at dawn. General Drury-Lowe with the cavalry, Mounted Infantry and 'N' Battery were on the right, protecting the exposed flank. As the infantry approached them, the Egyptians were seen to be evacuating their positions, and Drury-Lowe took the cavalry ahead in a sweeping move towards the Canal at Mahsama. The infantry occupied Tel-el-Mahuta at 08:00 and the cavalry cleared the enemy from Mahsama, capturing a number of the Krupp field guns and a large quantity of arms and ammunition.

General Graham's Brigade was moved quickly ahead to Mahsama to support the cavalry. Drury-Lowe's cavalry patrols had penetrated as far as Kassassin and, finding that the Egyptians had abandoned the place, the 4th Dragoon Guards occupied the village, the station and the canal locks at dawn on 26 August. The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry and the York and Lancasters were moved ahead again to consolidate the gains and to form a defensive position at Kassassin.

The proximity of Kassassin to the Egyptian defences at Tel-el-

*General Sir Garnet Wolseley's despatch after the action at Kassassin, published in The Gazette.*

## THE ACTION AT KASSASSIN.

The *Gazette* of last night publishes the following Despatch, which has been received by the Secretary of State for War from the General Officer Commanding in Egypt:—

Ismailia, Sept. 4, 1892.

Sir,—I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of the report from Major General Graham, V.C., C.B., of the action at Kassassin on the 28th ultimo.

The operations of the Cavalry were so distinct from those of the Infantry, that I venture to forward also copy of the report from Major General Drury-Lowe, C.B., although that officer is junior to Major General Graham, and acted under his orders during the day.

The conduct of the soldiers of all arms was excellent, and many gallant deeds were done throughout the action. Two recent instances have come under my notice of men, who, being painfully wounded early in the day, continued to do their duty until severely wounded later on. One, on the 28th ultimo, was that of Lieutenant G. G. Cunningham, of the Cornwall Light Infantry; and the other, on the 25th ultimo, was that of Gunner Joseph Knowles, of N Brigade A Battery Royal Horse Artillery. As it is by soldier-like courage of this nature that the British Army has always maintained its high reputation, I have great pleasure in bringing these names to your notice.

The dispositions made by Major General Graham, V.C., C.B., during the action at Kassassin were all they should have been; and his steady advance upon the enemy, when he showed a disposition to drive his attack home, was well conceived and well executed.

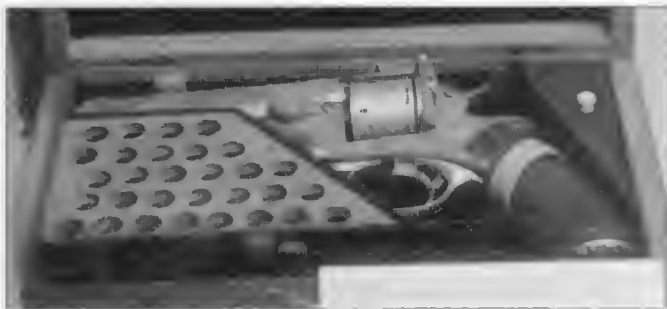
The dashing and yet skilful manner in which the 1st Brigade of Cavalry was hauled by Brigadier General Sir Baker Russell, under the immediate orders of Major General Drury-Lowe, was all that could be desired. The charge of the Household Cavalry under Colonel Ewart was most gallantly executed.

I have to regret the loss of many brave men, and it is a matter of deep sorrow to all this army that we have not been able to ascertain the fate of Lieutenant Gribble, 3d Dragoon Guards, who was Orderly Officer to Sir Baker Russell; he has been missing since the Cavalry charge on the 25th August, and although the ground where it took place has been searched, no trace of him has been found.

I shall only add to what is contained in the enclosed reports that all ranks in this army are animated by the highest military spirit, and all longing to advance upon the enemy.

I have, &c.,

G. J. WOLSELEY, General,  
Commander in Chief of the British Forces  
in Egypt.



*A revolver and fittings purchased by Major Dent of The Royal Dragoons for the Egyptian Campaign.*

Kebir made it an ideal base for the final attack, and it was vital to retain possession of the village, even though it would not be easy to defend with a small force. The village was in a slight depression, surrounded at about 2,000 yards by a semi-circle of hills, 150 feet high, which were occupied in strength by the enemy infantry and artillery. General Graham's troops available at Kassassin were detachments of the 4th and 7th Dragoon Guards, two guns of 'N', 2nd Battalion DCLI, 2nd Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment, a company of Mounted Infantry, a detachment of Royal Marine Artillery, and a Royal Navy party with two Gatling guns. The 1st Cavalry Brigade, the remaining four guns of 'N' Battery, two guns of 'G' Battery, 'B' Brigade, RHA, and a battalion of Royal Marine Light Infantry were in reserve at Mahsama.

At 09:30 on 28 August, a large body of Egyptian cavalry appeared to the north of Kassassin and, although the enemy throughout the day did no more than make threatening moves, General Graham requested support from the Cavalry Brigade and the artillery at Mahsama.

The two guns of 'G' Battery reached Kassassin in mid-afternoon, and by 16:30 it appeared that the enemy was preparing for a major attack, their skirmishers moving forward under a heavy artillery covering fire. General Graham had deployed his troops with the left flank resting on the canal, covered by an infantry group, supported by the two Royal Navy Gatling guns. The defence line faced north-west, with the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry on the left and the York and Lancaster Regiment to their right and echeloned back. The Sections of 'N' and 'G' Batteries, RHA, were in support, as was the detachment of RMA, who had mounted the captured Krupp guns on a railway truck. The

right flank was left open, since Graham expected that this would be covered by the cavalry moving up from Mahsama.

It was this exposed flank that the Egyptians attacked. The four Royal Horse Artillery guns engaged the advancing enemy infantry, but their rate of fire was limited since once again they only had the gun limber ammunition, their ammunition waggons having been bogged down in soft sand. When their ammunition was exhausted, the guns were withdrawn, and the infantry, with only the captured Krupp guns in support, were left to contain the enemy.

It was of concern to General Graham that the Cavalry Brigade had not arrived, but it was discovered later that the messenger had experienced difficulty in finding Drury-Lowe, and the request for assistance was late being delivered. Fortunately, Graham had the situation in hand, and by 19:15, having contained all the enemy attacks, he ordered a general advance. Unaware of the current situation, the Cavalry Brigade, with four guns of 'N' Battery, RHA, arrived at Kassassin after sunset, but in bright moonlight. As they reached the scene of the action, Brigadier Baker Russell led a charge by the Household Cavalry against the retreating enemy, an episode known as the 'Moonlight Charge'. All the British troops were recalled to their defence positions at 20:45 and, as a precautionary measure, the Guards Brigade was ordered up to Kassassin during the night.

There was now a period of intense consolidation and build-up of supplies at the front. The remaining troops despatched from Britain were disembarked at Ismailia and General Hamley, the 2nd Division Commander, and a part of his Division that had been left at Alexandria to keep enemy troops occupied there, was brought round by ship to Ismailia. The Indian Army contingent also arrived from Suez. Considerable difficulty had been experienced in moving sufficient supplies to the front, due to a shortage of transport

vehicles and the limitations of suitable vessels on the Sweetwater Canal. It was expected that this situation would be relieved when the locomotives shipped from Britain, which had been landed at Suez, reached Ismailia, but it was early September before the Royal Engineers Railway Company was able to put the line as far as Kassassin into operating order. However, by 7 September, General Wolseley was satisfied that the situation was such that he could concentrate the entire force required for the assault on the enemy defences at Tel-el-Kebir in the Kassassin area. These troop movements were to be completed by 12 September.

However, before the troop movements were completed, the Egyptians again attempted to dislodge the British from Kassassin. This attack, planned by Arabi himself, was on a large scale, involving 18 battalions of infantry, 30 field guns, and a large body of mounted troops. It was a two-pronged attack, from Tel-el-Kebir in the west and from El Salahieh in the north. There were some 8,000 troops of all arms encamped at Kassassin, whilst the Guards Brigade and additional artillery were at Tel-el-Mahuta.

The first indication of an impending attack came at 04:00 on the morning of 9 September, when a patrol of the 13th Bengal Lancers observed the enemy, in strength, moving eastwards from Tel-el-Kebir. This information was given to General Graham, commanding at Kassassin, at 06:15, and he requested the cavalry to delay the enemy advance. The troops at Kassassin were stood to in their defence positions and General Willis, the Divisional Commander informed. The troops were deployed with the 1st Battalion, Royal West Kent Regiment on the south bank of the Sweetwater Canal, supported by a Section of 5 Battery Scottish Division, Royal Garrison Artillery, equipped with two 25pdr guns, and the Royal Marine Artillery detachment. North of the canal, the line ran approximately north-west, with 3rd Battalion King's Royal Rifle Corps on the left, followed in line by the Royal Marine Light Infantry and 2nd Battalion York and Lancaster Regiment. Next to them were sited 'A' and 'D' Batteries, 1st Brigade, Royal Field Artillery, with their 16pdr guns sited in pre-prepared gun positions. To the right of these batteries were 2nd Battalion, The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry. By

06:45 the Indian Cavalry Brigade and 'G' Battery, 'B' Brigade Royal Horse Artillery, had moved forward to provide a screen, and to delay the Egyptian advance. The 1st Cavalry Brigade had been moved up, with 'N' Battery, RHA, and ordered to sweep to the right and prevent the two enemy columns from joining forces. At the same time, the Guards Brigade was moved forward with orders to attack the enemy column moving south from El Salahieh on its flank.

At 07:45 General Willis, who had assumed command, considered that the situation was such that a counter-attack could be made, and he ordered a general advance. In an effort to counter this move, the enemy attempted a flanking attack against the advancing infantry, but this was broken up by the fire from the two Field Batteries, who had withdrawn their guns from the fixed positions and were advancing with the infantry. In the face of the steady advance, the Egyptians retreated in some disorder. General Wolseley had arrived at Kassassin at noon, and at 13:30, with the enemy in full retreat, he ordered his troops to return to their positions at Kassassin. This decision not to follow-up the advantage gained and move directly onto the Egyptian position at Tel-el-Kebir, was much criticised at the time, but the decision was influenced by the necessity to inflict a decisive defeat on the enemy to ensure a speedy occupation of Cairo. Consequently, Wolseley adhered to his original plan, and the concentration of the troops and supplies necessary for the major attack and the dash to Cairo continued. During the afternoon of 12 September, right on schedule, the last unit required for the attack arrived at Kassassin. **MI**

#### **To be concluded**

#### **Acknowledgements**

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# The Making of Hiram Ulysses (S.) Grant

DAVID COWARD

RAGS TO RICHES stories fill America's history. But no-one in the mid-west of the late 1850s could have guessed a shabby man in his late thirties, selling firewood to support his family, would in a few years be the decisive general of the American Civil War.

Hiram Ulysses Grant was born on 27 April 1822 in Ohio. His father Jesse had grown up amidst the adventure of frontier life, untroubled by a meagre education. But Jesse Grant planned to become rich. Soon after his son's birth he founded a tannery.

Young Ulysses played around the hooves of the teams that made deliveries at the tannery gates. He loved horses; aged eight he was working as a teamster, driving wagonloads of logs from forest to tannery. Soon he was delivering passengers and cargo on round trips of over a hundred miles. He developed a natural sense of direction and eye for ground. At school he was quiet and withdrawn, excelling at written and mental arithmetic, but it was his precocious horsemanship that made his father proud. Perhaps the boy was too shy and reticent, but the strong will and kind generosity inherited from his mother soon gained him friends.

In 1837 Jesse Grant was elected town mayor. Still a struggling businessman, he could not afford college fees. But influence could secure a college education at West Point, the United States Military Academy where the government paid all expenses. Ulysses wanted to farm, become a river trader, or get an education. He was indifferent when appointed to West Point in May 1839, although he was afraid of failing to meet the required academic standard. His neighbours were surprised that one so awkward and bashful was off to become an intrepid leader of men.

Excited only by the opportunity to see New York and Philadelphia, Hiram Ulysses Grant travelled to West Point. His congressman and patron Thomas L. Hamer, in a rush to send in his papers, had nominated him as Ulysses Simpson Grant. The Adjutant insisted he could only enter with the exact name shown on the official document. Rechristened by bureaucracy, Ulysses Simpson Grant entered the Class of 1843.

THE GREAT COMMANDERS is a major new six-part television series, analysing human and military qualities in six of the world's greatest war leaders — Alexander, Caesar, Napoleon, Nelson, Grant and Zhukov. It will be shown on Channel 4 on Sunday evenings from 21 November. In the third of four articles, David Coward examines factors in the early life of Grant that led to his becoming a great commander.

He was gleefully nicknamed 'Uncle Sam Grant'. Drill and rigid discipline were the daily routine. With no sense of rhythm, loose rustic clothes and the rider's awkward gait, Grant had trouble keeping step on the parade ground. Eastern and Southern dandies called him 'Country Sam'. But he also had self-reliance and courage, knocking down a larger cadet who shoved him out of his allotted place in the line. To his surprise he easily passed the Entrance Examination and was fitted for his grey uniform. Grant hated the strict regime, but wrote home that 'as I have started, I am bound to go through'.

In July the new cadets — the 'plebe' year — joined the annual summer encampment, which Grant found 'wearisome and uninteresting', bullied and acting as a servant to the older cadets. He was not taken with West Point: 'a military life had no charms for me, and I had not the faintest idea of staying in the army even if I should be graduated, which I did not expect'. Unable or unwilling to conform to the demands of the parade square, stuck in routine, Grant became bored. His only excitement was the prospect of an honourable discharge if a bill was passed to abolish the Academy; he hopefully devoured newspaper reports. The Bill failed, and Grant resigned himself to preparing for the January Examination. Another cadet summed him up as: 'lazy and careless... if he had laboured hard he would have stood very high...'. But Grant devoted more time to the many novels in the Academy library than to his studies.

At West Point there were seven grades of demerits, from the trivial to the very serious. On the Conduct Roll he stood 137th among the 200 cadets at West Point — not for disobedience but for slouchiness. The General Merit was made by

adding this list to academic results, Grant cynically noting that 'any special excellence in study would be affected by the manner in which he tied his shoes'.

Horsemanship was introduced by the new Superintendent in the second, sophomore year. At this and mathematics Grant excelled. Against regulations he tried smoking, but was very sick and gave it up. This was his only undetected crime. Visiting after taps and kicking a horse earned three extra tours of duty. He was not one of the élite few selected to become a corporal, and probably didn't care; his aim was to eventually become a professor of mathematics. Grant found ten weeks home furlough shorter than a week at West Point.

His third year could have shone with success. Selected with 18 others of the junior year for promotion to Sergeant, Grant found that 'the promotion was too much for me' and was dropped back into the ranks. He marked up his two most serious crimes, neglect of duty and speaking in a disrespectful manner to a superior officer.

In his final, senior year, the cadet studied military engineering, constitutional and international law, science of war and fortifications, mineralogy and geology, military pyrotechnics, and a review of artillery and infantry tactics. In four years of study, West Point taught little tactics; Grant's only textbook would be war itself. Grant was now at his most popular. He was elected president of the élitist cadet literary society, 'The Dialectic'. With patience he broke the bad horses that were added to the Academy stables. Plebes would go to the riding hall just to watch him ride; he set a high jump record that would stand at the Point for 25 years. Without exertion he graduated 21st — a respectable



*Cadet Grant, demoted to private, receives his graduation diploma along with the survivors of the Class of 1843. Innovative fly tastening pantaloons had been introduced by the new Superintendent in 1840. The style, which boldly recognised male anatomy, so distressed the Superintendent's wife that she is reported as saying that 'Cadets thus dressed should not come in person to the house'. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection.)*

if unremarkable result — among the 39 survivors of the Class of 1843.

Without the conduct roll he would have been placed much higher, but at West Point conformity to a rigid set of rules was all-important. Graduating from an engineering college, the top West Pointers entered the Corps of Engineers. One such was Robert E. Lee of the Class of 1829, a name notorious among cadets as he had never received a single demerit. Grant had not conformed at West Point. He had graduated respectably without having been really influenced by Army and West Point regulations. Other graduates had. Grant would later write: 'Some of our generals failed because they worked out everything by rule. They were always thinking about what Napoleon would do. Unfortunately for their plans, the rebels would be thinking about something else.'

Unconcerned, Grant expected to spend little time in the Army. He hoped to return to West Point as an assistant in the mathematics department. As befitted a brilliant horseman



*The Battle of Palo Alto, 7 May 1846. Although a spectator for much of the battle, Grant saw the use of superior artillery (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection.)*

below the standards required for the technical branches, his first choice was the US Army's single mounted regiment of Dragoons; military bureaucracy sent him to the Fourth Infantry. The Brevet Second Lieutenant went on leave in his new uniform, keen to impress his old schoolmates — particularly the girls. Abused by urchins, cruelly parodied by a local stable-man in a crude copy of his uniform, Grant developed a 'distaste for military uniform that I never recovered from'. Henceforth he tried to avoid it.

Joining the Fourth Infantry at Jefferson Barracks, St Louis, he settled down to garrison routine. The young officer expected to be called back to a faculty position at West Point as soon as a vacancy occurred. His expectations changed when in May 1844 his Regiment joined the 'Army of Observation' in Louisiana in an attempt to intimidate Mexico to cede to the United States all territory north of the Rio Grande. As Grant himself put it, the army's strategy was to 'provoke a fight, but it was essential that Mexico should start it'. Under-established, the Fourth could not spare Grant for a professorship. He abandoned his studies of mathematics and settled down to the more soldierly pursuits of betting and horse racing. On leave Grant became engaged to Julia Dent, sister of his West Point room mate.

The 'Army of Observation' prepared for war but the Mexicans did not respond, even when it moved into Texas.

The Fourth Infantry arrived without their elderly colonel, who had dropped dead whilst taking his men at drill. Grant worked with his men up to his waist in water to clear obstacles to the landing of reinforcements, amusing dandy officers and making his commander remark 'I wish I had more officers like Grant, who would stand ready to set a personal example when needed'. Grant struggled with his conscience, considering the coming war 'one of the most unjust ever waged by a stronger against a weaker nation... I had a horror of the Mexican War... only I had not moral courage enough to resign... I considered my supreme duty was to my flag.'

From 30 September 1845 Grant became a full second lieutenant, ahead of 28 of his classmates. The months in camp had weakened the 'Army of Observation'. Its commander was Brevet Brigadier General Zachary Taylor, 'Old Rough and Ready'. He was a man of action at odds with the fussy dress codes of West Point. To Grant this was an endearing quality but Taylor ignored camp sanitation; throughout the campaign Grant would see more deaths from disease than battle.

In March 1846 the army crossed the dry dusty plain to the Rio Grande and the town of Matamoros. Mexico finally declared war and Grant was resigned to do his duty. In combat the age and attitude of several colonels would make them unfit for duty and unusual responsibility would fall on young officers like Grant. His first battle was Palo Alto, 7 May 1846. 'I did not feel a sensation of fear until nearly the close of the firing. A ball struck close by me... It knocked Captain Page's under jaw entirely off...' He saw

well handled artillery rout cavalry and impress infantry with the futility of advancing against it. That night Grant slept soundly, confident in his physical courage.

With the battle of Resaca de la Palma the Americans captured Matamoros. In the confusion of combat, Grant's company had 'captured' some Mexicans only to find the ground had already been taken by other American troops. Despite this anti-heroic role, there was much for the young Grant to learn from. Aggressive use of artillery firepower and infantry charges were winning the battles because the Mexicans depended on cavalry alone. But in the Civil War both sides would use firepower and infantry charges and the result would be years of bloody slaughter.

Grant read 'of deeds of heroism... none of which we ever saw... I do not suppose any war was ever fought with reference to which so many romances were invented.' General Taylor avoided idolatry, writing that 'I have a great horror of being made a lion of'. To young Grant, this was the act of a great general. But Taylor did little to check outrages committed against the Mexicans. Grant's shame for his part in the war grew.

As a loyal officer, Grant kept his feelings to himself. He found himself nominated as the Fourth Regiment's Quartermaster. It was a logical choice, for he was an experienced teamster, son of a now successful businessman, and popular enough with other officers to wrangle his regiment's share of meagre government supplies. Grant objected as he would lose his place in battle but received the answer 'Lieutenant Grant was assigned

to duty as Quartermaster and Commissary because of his observed ability, skill and persistency in the line of duty'. The difficult march to Monterrey gave Grant practical experience of the logistics that made fighting possible: 'there was no road... so obstructed... but that Grant would work his way through and have it in the camp of his brigade before the campfires were lighted.'

General Taylor's Army had been reinforced by thousands of volunteers, whose indiscipline and high spirits contrasted with the disciplined and stoical regular. But in battle Grant saw them 'become soldiers... almost at once.' One day he would command huge armies of volunteers, but it was in Mexico that he learned that they were best commanded and led by popular consent rather than force. Arriving with the Ohio Volunteers was Brigadier General and Congressman Thomas L. Hamer, Grant's patron. Grant believed that had Hamer not died from disease he would have secured him a coveted staff job later in his career, where he would have spent the Civil War in obscurity behind a desk.

Grant was not happy with his safe job away from the fighting. As Quartermaster he should have remained to guard the regimental camp when the assault on Monterrey began on 20 September 1846. But he rode to find his regiment preparing to charge. Lacking the moral courage to return to camp Grant charged with them, the only man on horseback. Taylor's tactics were based on blind aggression, highly effective against inferior and poorly organised troops. Faced with a well-fortified town it was near fatal. The assault was especially so for the Fourth Infantry, whose colonel had selected an exposed route. Almost a third of the regiment were hit. As the companies advanced into the well-fortified city, musket balls flew at them like 'bushels of hickory nuts'. At dusk they were ordered to hold the small outpost they had taken. Grant went out to find the bodies of stricken friends and give water to the wounded. The next day the *yanquis* rested and licked their wounds. At daylight on the 23rd the advance continued, but slowed as the men ran short of ammunition. Grant rode to call for more, hidden from the enemy by hooking one foot around the cantle of his saddle and one arm around the neck of his horse.



In occupied Monterrey Grant remained quartermaster, skirmishing with raiding rancheros on foraging expeditions. A new officer found the young veteran 'a thoroughly kind and manly young fellow, with no bad habits, and was respected by his brother officers'. In early 1847 the Fourth were shipped back to the Rio Grande, to join an expedition that would land at Vera Cruz, take it, then march on Mexico City. Grant's commander was General Winfield S. Scott, 'Old Fuss and Feathers', who had first inspired Grant's high regard when he inspected the Corps of Cadets at West Point. Unlike Taylor, Scott was always dressed according to regulations. His careful adaptation of strategic theory to the realities of the Mexican War contrasted with Taylor's aggressive tactics, but both generals were highly successful. Perhaps Grant's generalship was the child of these two fathers, using aggressive and simple tactics as part of a subtle strategic plan.

They were landed without incident twelve miles south of their objective. The beach was undefended, the Mexicans waiting inside the fortified city of Vera Cruz. Reluctant to risk the butchery of a front assault when he needed every man for the march on Mexico City, but aware of the problems of disease, General Scott immediately began a protracted bombardment. By 27 March the Mexicans capitulated, Scott having lost 67 casualties. Unlike Taylor, Scott respected the rights of the Mexicans and attempted conciliation.

Grant and the Fourth marched on Mexico City. In snatches of newspapers and through camp gossip Grant learned that Scott and Taylor were both subjected to power

intrigues from President Polk, who feared that their success could lead to triumphant presidential candidacies. At the rear with his wagons, brooding over the political pressure upon a commanding general, he missed fighting at Cerro Cordo, Contreras and Churubusco. Despite having gone far beyond the call of a quartermaster's duty at Monterrey he was now one of the minority of the class of 1843 who were still second lieutenants.

On 7 September 1847 Grant took part in the raid on Molino del Rey, an outpost of Chapultepec, chief fortress of Mexico City. It was a bloody assault, with little artillery preparation, described by one officer as 'utter imbecility'. In a subsequent assault Chapultepec fell. Ahead of his advancing regiment, Grant worked his way around the flank of a Mexican barricade and stormed it with a mixed ad hoc force of infantry and artillery while another force stormed it frontally. He outflanked a second barricade by installing a light howitzer in a church tower. Called for and congratulated by the general, Grant was given a second gun. It was taken back with him but not used. Grant felt as a second lieutenant he should not contradict a general by saying there was only room for one gun in the church tower.

That night the Mexicans surrendered. General Scott, outnumbered and operating without a base had succeeded, breaking the 'rules' of war. The significance was not lost on Grant, despite his own personal success. He received a full lieutenantancy, and was awarded a brevet captaincy, 'for gallant conduct at Capultepec... Always cool, swift and unhurried in battle... as unconcerned



as if it was a hailstorm instead of a storm of bullets.' Temporarily at the top third of class, with the peace he would revert to first lieutenant for years until he became a full captain.

Settling into the occupation of Mexico City, Grant turned his regimental fund into a profit-making business; in two months he made more money for the fund than his wages in the entire war. Mexico had made him an army man. He would not renew his application to West Point. He was in a hurry to marry Julia.

After three years away, Grant returned to a long honeymoon. The newly married couple finally reported to Madison Barracks in Sacketts Harbor, a bleak village on Lake Ontario. In March 1849 he was posted to Detroit and reassigned as Regimental Quartermaster of the Fourth Infantry Regiment in September. Unrelieved by marches and the smoke of battle, it was a bore. But he was happy with Julia, she enjoyed the social life, and Grant found ample challenge for his horse-

*Grant at Mexico City, outflanking a Mexican barricade by installing a howitzer in a church tower. This watercolour clearly shows the rear details of the winter fatigue dress — regulation uniform for US officers in the Mexican War. (Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection.)*

manship at local races.

In spring 1851, the War Department abandoned the Detroit barracks and transferred the Fourth to Sacketts Harbor. It was a letdown after the pleasures of Detroit. But at 28 Grant was settling down to the responsibilities of fatherhood. As the senior First Lieutenant he was due for the next captain's vacancy. He joined the Sons of Temperance. But the nature of his chosen career was about to deal him a nasty blow.

In 1852 the Fourth were ordered to California. Grant's wife was pregnant again and could not join him for at least a year. His eight-year enlistment had expired, and his contemporaries recall his talking of resignation. But it was too late to take on a new profession with three mouths to feed. Julia went to stay with her father-in-law, whose business continued to



*The Battle of Resaca de la Palma, 9 May 1846. In this confused battle Grant commanded a company.*

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prosper. It was as well she did, as the Pacific journey was a terrible nightmare.

The Fourth sailed for the Isthmus of Panama, where they would march to the Pacific and embark for California. One hundred men died crossing the Isthmus, and on arrival at San Francisco the regiment was invalided to Benicia Barracks to recuperate. Once fit, the Companies of the Fourth were spread along the Upper Sacramento and Columbia Rivers. Frustrated, the son of temperance laid aside his vows. Grant's habitual drunkenness is an American historical myth, save for this lonely and homesick period of his life. The high cost of living meant he could not afford to bring out his family, and attempts to boost his pay through farming and business schemes were a bitter failure.

On 9 August 1853 Grant received his Captaincy, and became 'F' Company Commander at Fort Humboldt. Slow promotion meant he would not become a major for ten, even twenty years; high prices meant he could still not afford to keep his family. Despite promotion he now had fewer duties to occupy himself with; Grant rode and drank more. His new commanding officer was a disciplinarian — Grant's disregard for the niceties of mess life had offended him years ago. No records remain, but it seems that Grant, drunk at a pay parade, was offered resignation instead of being charged. On 11 April 1854 Captain U.S. Grant resigned.

On borrowed money and under a cloud he returned home. His father, who had once boasted of his soldier son, was humiliated but Ulysses, reunited with Julia, was enjoying a second honeymoon. Attempts at farming failed. He sold wood at Jefferson Barracks, wearing his old uniform with the insignia removed. In 1857 he met Sherman, his senior at West Point whom he had only known from afar, who had been equally unlucky. Sherman wrote: 'West Point and the regular army are not good schools for farmers, (and) bankers'. Taking over his father-in-law's house and farm, his crop was ruined by a June frost. Real estate brought too little income, attempts to secure official posts met with limited success. In 1860 he moved to Galena, Illinois, to one of his father's five stores. Soon he and his brothers

**Richard Hook's reconstructions on the back cover show: Right, West Point Cadet Officer, 1842. Grant held his sergeant's rank for a very short time; he may not have had it long enough to have worn the uniform changes shown here. His Cadet Dress Cap has the drooping cock leathers and Engineer Castle introduced for Cadet Officers in 1842. The Cadet sword shown was worn from 1839-1872. A similar sword is worn at West Point today. As Union Commanding General Grant would smoke many cigars in a day but experimenting with the habit at West Point only made him sick. He wouldn't smoke again until the Mexican War. Left, Quartermaster, Monterrey, 1846. Although as Quartermaster of the Fourth Infantry he should have kept out of the fighting, he nevertheless joined in the assault. When ammunition ran low he rode his horse Indian-fashion through the Mexican held streets to call for more. Horse and rider arrived at headquarters unscathed.**

would inherit a thriving business. Hunched over ledgers by day, at home with his beloved family at night, Ulysses Simpson Grant's future was not bright but assured.

As his circle of friends slowly grew, so did the final stages of the rift between the northern and southern states. When Fort Sumter fell, the State of Illinois prepared to raise six regiments of volunteers. Grant, quiet but respected for his military experience and cool determination in a crisis, was elected chairman of a recruit raising meeting. Grant later wrote: 'I never went into our leather store again after that meeting'. A neighbour noticed a metamorphosis: 'I saw new energies in him. He dropped a stoop shouldered way of walking, and set his hat forward on his head in jaunty fashion.'

Grant's subsequent rise to United States Commanding General in three years, and President in seven will be featured in Episode Five of 'The Great Commanders', which begins on Channel 4 on Sunday 21 November after 8pm. Using archives, 3rd computer graphics, location footage, and interviews with various experts, it will look at Grant's qualities as a commander, focusing on the Battle of the Wilderness. A book to accompany the series, written by Phil Grabsky and with an introduction by series consultant David Chandler, has been published by Boxtree, price £14.99.





Monterrey, 1846  
**Ulysses S. Grant**  
West Point, 1842

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